United Nations E/2010/62

# Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
7 May 2010

Original: English

**Substantive session of 2010**
New York, 28 June-2 July 2010
Item 2 (c) of the provisional agenda*
**High-level segment: annual ministerial review**

## Letter dated 6 May 2010 from the Permanent Representative of the Netherlands to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Economic and Social Council

Attached herewith is the national report of the Netherlands on progress towards the achievement of the internationally agreed goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, for the annual ministerial review to be held during the high-level segment of the 2010 substantive session of the Economic and Social Council (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would circulate the present letter and its annex as a document of the Council, under item 2 (c) of the provisional agenda.

(*Signed*) Herman **Schaper**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

* E/2010/100.

10-35455 (E) 280510

Please recycle

## Annex to the letter dated 6 May 2010 from the Permanent Representative of the Netherlands to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Economic and Social Council

## Voluntary national report of the Netherlands

# Part A

## Summary

1. The Netherlands warmly welcomes the attention to gender equality during this annual meeting of the Economic and Social Council. Fifteen years after the fourth Conference at which the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action were signed and 10 years after the adoption of the Millennium Development Goals, it is clear that much has been achieved and important progress has been made. The promotion of gender equality is one of the most powerful forces of change. Through gender equality the achievement of many social and economic goals of today can be accelerated. So we can move beyond the "why" of gender equality and can focus on the "how". However, at the same time real changes in policies have not been realized. Goal 3 and Goal 5 still remain the Millennium Development Goals where least progress is made. Gender mainstreaming, in vogue at the turn of the millennium, has too often resulted in gender "away streaming". We have to show that the future of humanity lies with the improvement of gender equality and the active empowerment of women. The challenge is to prove that this does not remain at the level of good intentions, but that real and sustainable change can come out of it.

2. Consequently, considerable energy is needed time and again at all levels to justify interventions designed to reach aims and objectives that were agreed upon internationally years ago. Over the last years, several new initiatives have been taken to break through the image of "gender fatigue". The challenge is to show that these are not mere words, but that real and sustainable change can come out of it.

3. More is needed to get to a new level and make real progress. Goals can be met provided there is a combination of political will, leadership and commitment at the highest level, expertise, a clear policy and adequate funding. For this reason the Netherlands has identified gender equality as a core objective of government policy. Active monitoring of these elements takes place and is reported to parliament. The challenge is to keep this spirit alive and to broaden it internationally.

4. In the Netherlands, since 2007 a renewed interest in gender equality, both at the domestic as well as the global level, has emerged. Domestically, first of all the focus lies on increasing the labour force participation of women: because of the high percentage of Dutch women working part-time, women in the labour force in full-time equivalents is one of the lowest in Europe and only 45 per cent of Dutch women are economically independent. Secondly, special attention is given to women and girls from ethnic minority groups and the specific difficulties they have to fully participate in Dutch society. Thirdly, there is a focus on combating domestic violence against women and girls, sexual violence, trafficking, honour crimes and female genital mutilation.

5. Internationally, the Dutch gender equality policy is structured according to the operational framework of the United Nations Millennium Project Task Force on Education and Gender Equality. Seven areas of intervention are identified: post-primary education for girls; promoting sexual and reproductive health and rights; investing in infrastructure to reduce women's and girls' time burdens; guaranteeing women's and girls' property and inheritance rights; eliminating gender inequality in employment; increasing political participation of women; and finally combating violence against women. Special attention is given to the issue of women and peace and security: in 2007 a National Action Plan on Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) was launched. The renewed attention to international gender issues has led to additional investments: more than €300 million extra has been committed. About half of this was invested in promoting sexual and reproductive health and rights and combating maternal mortality and €70 million was invested in a new Millennium Development Goal 3 fund, that supports women's empowerment activities worldwide.

6. The enhancement of policy focus on gender and sexual and reproductive health and rights is embedded in a set of policy priorities in Dutch development cooperation policy. The Millennium Development Goals are at the heart of this policy. The leading principle in policy implementation is the notion that attainment of the Millennium Development Goals is not a mere responsibility of the Minister for development cooperation, but a matter for all stakeholders in society: all ministries, the private sector and the society as a whole.

7. This report provides an overview of Dutch development cooperation policies and the four priority themes that have been identified on the basis of an assessment of the progress on the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. As a result Dutch development cooperation is focused on security and development, economic growth and equity, climate, sustainability and energy and gender equality. This report is not intended to give an exhaustive account of Dutch development cooperation, but is highly focused on Dutch policy towards gender equality.

## Overview of Dutch development cooperation policy

8. Development cooperation and human rights form two key pillars of the Netherlands foreign policy. The Netherlands is one of the few OECD/DAC-donors that spend 0.8 per cent of GDP on development cooperation (ODA for 2009 amounted to €4.6 billion). The Government placed the Millennium Development Goals at the centre of its international policy. A Cabinet project (Project 2015) was designed for the promotion of the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. This gave an important boost to efforts to find new partners and approaches within development, in the form of the so-called Millennium Agreements. These agreements include public-private partnerships with a wide range of stakeholders throughout society, including the private sector, knowledge institutes, universities and non-governmental organizations and illustrate the broad public involvement in the issue of development.

9. In October 2007 the policy letter *Our Common Concern: Investing in Development in a Changing World* was presented to the Dutch parliament. A political approach to development cooperation lies at the heart of the policy letter.

This takes the form of a heightened focus on local processes of accountability, human rights and equity.

10. Based on a scan of the progress on the Millennium Development Goals and broad consultations with civil society, four themes were identified on which efforts were to be stepped up:

## A. Security and development

11. Without a more effective international effort, the Millennium Goals will not be attained in conflict-affected countries and threats to human rights and the international rule of law will remain. Support to conflict-affected countries is in the interest of human security, but also serves an enlightened self-interest to combat global instability that undermines regional and national security. This policy is implemented mainly through multilateral organizations and entails support geared to improving the security situation in those countries, State building and development. An important Dutch concern is to ensure that socio-economic programmes in those countries also focus on the furtherance of gender equality in accordance with the action plan to implement Security Council resolution 1325 (2000).

## B. Economic growth and equity

12. Economic growth is often considered to be the driving force behind development. However, economic growth on its own is not enough to establish long-term development and to structurally reduce poverty. In order to achieve this, economic growth must be broad-based, linked to policies that reduce social and economic inequality. Dutch development policy aims to support both growth and equity. It pursues an integrated approach by focusing on several levels and areas of policy, with a special focus on the poor. In this, the business climate is of great importance and special attention is given to public sector development (macro-economic policy and good governance) and private sector development (development and improving access to markets, financial sector development, infrastructure and skills and knowledge).

## C. Sustainability, climate and energy

13. In response to different crises related to environmental degradation and loss of biodiversity, climate change and a threatening shortage of energy supplies, sustainable development, renewable energy and adaptation to climate change have been put on top of the Dutch agenda. The Netherlands supports developing countries in the sustainable management of their natural resources, in the provision of access to reliable, clean and renewable sources of energy, and in the adaptation to and mitigation of climate change. Its continued commitment to provide 50 million people with access to safe water and improved sanitation by 2015 constitutes an important contribution to the health, dignity and well-being of citizens and the environment which they depend on.

## D. Equal rights and opportunities for women, and sexual and reproductive health and rights

14. This theme, being the thematic focus of the report, is dealt with in part B.

15. In order to increase the focus and effectiveness of the bilateral programme the number of partners has been reduced over the years. The remaining 40 partner countries were categorized into one of three profiles: (1) accelerated achievement of Millennium Development Goals; (2) security and development; and (3) broad-based relationship. The development relationship with seven countries will be phased out by the end of 2011.

16. *Profile 1: Accelerated achievement of Millennium Development Goals*. The Dutch embassies in these countries have been asked to focus their programme more sharply, partly in response to the European Union Code of Conduct. Existing agreements, such as those laid down in a joint assistance strategy, will continue to be respected. Scope also exists for deploying general or sectoral budget support, providing this is justified by the track record (internal analytical tool).

17. *Profile 2: Security and development*. Here Dutch assistance is structured around four basic interventions, namely, humanitarian aid geared to providing basic services; support of good governance and human rights (including transitional justice); support for security sector reforms to ensure basic security; and support for socio-economic reconstruction. In 2008 the Ministry of Foreign Affairs set up a Fragile States and Peacebuilding Unit to provide support. The unit works closely with embassies, other Dutch ministries, and national and international partners.

18. *Profile 3: Broad-based relationship*. As the name implies, relationships with countries in this profile will be broad-based, with the focus eventually moving away from development cooperation. The aim here is to limit bilateral input to no more than two sectors/themes.

19. In line with the policy priorities that were set in *Our Common Concern* we had to rethink the way we execute our policies and this reflection resulted in the "Modernization Agenda for International Cooperation 2.0" which was presented by the Minister for Development Cooperation in 2008. Development cooperation is set in a changing world that demands coherent policies on global issues and a maximum effort for effectiveness. The Netherlands is a leading donor on policy coherence for development. Memorandums were written together with other ministers on migration and development and on agriculture, rural economic development and food security. Policy memorandums on fragile States, multilateral aid and civil society organizations have also been published in the spirit of this modern Development Cooperation 2.0 in order to increase the openness, policy coherence for development and synergy in the Dutch development programme.

**Cooperation with multilateral organizations**

20. A policy letter setting out Dutch views on multilateral development cooperation was published in 2009. It concludes that global problems like the financial crisis, the food crisis and the climate crisis emphasize the need to strengthen multilateral cooperation. All these factors have prompted the Netherlands to step up its multilateral development cooperation effort over the coming years. The Netherlands is a strong supporter of United Nations reform and focuses its efforts on achieving a system of effective and efficient multilateral cooperation that reflects the new international environment and the changing needs of developing countries. Multilateral development institutions must increasingly become the preferred channel, on the strict condition that they operate effectively and

efficiently. The most relevant and best-performing institutions will be rewarded more systematically than before with ODA contributions and less earmarking.

**Cooperation with Dutch civil society**

21. The Netherlands is a strong supporter of civil society organizations because we are convinced that real change can only come from within societies. A total of 22 per cent of all ODA is channelled through those organizations. In 2009 a major shift was established in our funding system for Dutch non-governmental organizations. Based on a broad policy dialogue with civil society organizations a policy memorandum was written on working with civil society. The essence of the memorandum is to ensure better complementarity with our bilateral programme in partner countries and organizing cooperation around specific priority themes. In order to establish this modernization of the NGO-funding the requirement was imposed for the new co-funding system (starting in 2011) that a minimum of 60 per cent of the funding should be spent in Dutch partner countries. Furthermore, Dutch non-governmental organizations were asked to write funding proposals in cooperation with each other around specific themes to establish alliances of civil society organizations in order to generate more coherence and coordination in joint efforts.

**Implementing the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness: increasing our impact at field level**

22. The Netherlands strongly supports the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the Accra Agenda for Action as guiding principles for improving the delivery and impact of aid. It does so by participating actively in the OECD Working Party on Aid Effectiveness and advocating the principles at country level. In 2009 the Netherlands finalized and made public the Netherlands action plan for the implementation of the Paris Declaration and the Accra Agenda, which will guide the implementation for the coming years. Videoconferences were held with embassies in partner countries with which the Netherlands entertains a long-term development relationship and that took part in the monitoring of the Paris Declaration. At those conferences, a large number of embassy and headquarters participants discussed the constraints and opportunities for moving further on the aid effectiveness agenda. This resulted in country-specific priority-setting on the one hand and a number of actions for headquarters level on the other. The actions retained aim at (a) supporting our partner countries in achieving their Paris commitments, (b) extra efforts for improving our own performance (at embassy or headquarters level), and (c) efforts to better connect headquarters and field level, both within our own organization as well as through interaction with other agencies.

# Part B

*Gender equality: "Implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to gender equality and empowerment of women"*

## Introduction

1. The Netherlands is a party to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, adopted by the General Assembly in 1979. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women reviewed the fifth progress report of the Netherlands in February 2010, halfway through the implementation of the emancipation policy 2008-2011. A summary of the policy is presented in this report, with a focus on the international dimension.

## 1. Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Netherlands

2. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women is of paramount importance for the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment globally. State parties are legally bound to implement its provisions and can hold each other accountable. The Netherlands submitted its fifth progress report covering the period 2005 to 2008 on 30 June 2008. The reaction of the Committee was mixed.

3. The Netherlands was commended for its support of women's rights organizations and for incorporating a gender approach throughout its development cooperation programme. The Committee appreciated the initiatives undertaken nationally to combat domestic violence, female genital mutilation and honour crimes as well as discrimination based on sexual orientation. Finally, the Committee praised the creation of a Human Trafficking Task Force.

4. It was disappointed however in the limited follow-up to previous recommendations, in particular concerning advocacy for the Convention, its Optional Protocol and the previous concluding observations of the Committee. It also advised the Kingdom of the Netherlands[1] to design a national strategy to implement the Convention. Full implementation of the Convention is required to reach the Millennium Development Goals in the Netherlands. The Committee also urged the Netherlands to report on progress made in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. Finally, the Committee expressed its hope that the Netherlands would continue as global leader in the promotion of the human rights of women and gender equality.

## 2. Netherlands gender policy 2008-2011

5. Since 2007, a renewed interest in gender equality, at both the domestic and the global level, has emerged. The national gender policy, which in the Netherlands is called "emancipation policy", has been laid out in the governmental policy paper *More Opportunities for Women, Emancipation Policy 2008-2011*. Contributions by

[1] Consisting of the Netherlands, the Netherlands Antilles and Aruba.

the different ministries to its implementation are made as transparent and verifiable as possible. In 2010 each ministry will send a midterm review to Parliament outlining results obtained during the period 2008-2010 and exploring new opportunities. The midterm review will form the basis for the gender policy of the next Cabinet. The current policy is focused on the following themes:

### 2.1. Labour force participation of women

6. In the Netherlands female participation in the labour force is one of the highest in Europe. However, Dutch women mostly work part time: 31 per cent work less than 20 hours per week.[2] Therefore, the participation of Dutch women in the labour force in full-time equivalents is one of the lowest in Europe. The Dutch "one-and-a-half" culture, whereby men tend to work full time and women part time, is difficult to change. One of the consequences is that in 2007 only 45 per cent of the female population aged 15 to 64 earned enough to support themselves, compared to 70 per cent of the male population. During the past three years the Dutch Government has made a concerted effort to reverse this situation.

7. Financial incentives in the fiscal sphere have been established, making it more profitable for women to re-enter the labour market or expand their working hours. The Government has initiated a task force, Part-time Plus, to stimulate women working less than 24 hours per week to increase their number of working hours. Recent data indicates a modest increase in female labour participation rates, from 55 per cent in 2003 to 61 per cent in 2008.

8. The Government stimulates female entrepreneurship in particular, for example through the setting up of a special microcredit facility. Female participation in international trade missions is set to increase from 10 per cent to 20 per cent. Another challenge consists of combining work with childcare responsibilities. It requires flexibility in working hours, increased teleworking, more parental leave, better childcare quality and arrangements for informal care and volunteer work.

9. Female talent is not utilized to its full potential. In the Dutch parliament 43 per cent of the seats are held by women. However, in the private sector, but also in universities, the percentage of women in higher management positions is lagging behind in comparison to other parts of the world. In 2008 more than 50 organizations, in the public as well as in the private sector, voluntarily signed a charter called Talent to the Top. Participating organizations commit themselves to develop and/or implement a clear strategy to promote career opportunities for women and to increase the percentage of women in management positions at the level of Board of Directors. At this moment more than 100 organizations have signed the charter, including the national Government, universities and teaching hospitals. The number is still increasing. In 2007, the total income of women amounted to only 56 per cent of the total income of men. This percentage is unchanged from 2003.[3] Recent statistics concerning the wage gap between men and women indicate that women earn 20.8 per cent less than men in the Netherlands, whereas globally this percentage amounts to 16.5 per cent.[4] The Government is also committed to ending the existing wage gap between men and women.

[2] Source: www.e-quality.nl.

[3] Source: www.cbs.nl.

[4] Source: www.loonwijzer.nl.

### 2.2. Women and girls from ethnic minority groups

10. Ethnic minority women constitute 10 per cent of the female population of the country. Despite tremendous improvements over the years, there are still too many first-generation migrant women who do not have an adequate command of the Dutch language and lower educational levels than Dutch women at large. They do not fully participate in Dutch society. The Government encourages these women to take advantage of their options and possibilities. The 1001 Strengths Programme was designed in 2007 to get 50,000 women from ethnic minorities involved in paid or voluntary work. The use of female and male role models is employed to stimulate people to explore and use their options and opportunities. Men and fathers are encouraged to join in.

### 2.3. Security for women and girls

11. Domestic violence against women and girls, sexual violence, trafficking of women and girls, honour crimes and female genital mutilation has priority attention. The Government aims to prevent incidences and reduce numbers. In order to do this, enhancement of necessary professional expertise is an important requirement. As part of the prevention agenda, interventions have also been designed to prepare boys and girls to defend themselves through recognizing and dealing with unsafe situations and to teach them how to deal with each other in a responsible manner. It includes attention to the impact of the sexualization of society on boys and girls. Policy interventions have been designed to counteract the activities of so-called lover boys, who manipulate girls to prostitute themselves. The Government also continues interventions to lower the teenage pregnancy rates and to support teenage mothers. Gender equality needs to be promoted from a young age. Youth organizations play a special role in promoting gender equality.

### 2.4. International gender policy

12. The Netherlands continues to be concerned about ongoing gender discrimination globally, in all countries and across all sectors. It is a party to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and subscribes to internationally agreed upon agenda like the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (1994), the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995) and the Millennium Development Goals (2000).

13. The Dutch Government reconfirmed its commitments to this agenda in the context of Project 2015 in 2007. This project aims at creating an optimal Dutch contribution to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, from the perspective that this is the responsibility of all stakeholders in the public and private sector. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has the overall responsibility for the coordination of the international efforts of the Government in this respect. The rights and opportunities for women and girls (Goal 3 and Goal 5) are given a prominent place, not only in development policy but in integrated foreign policy as a whole. Addressing gender concerns globally encompasses more than meeting Goals 3 and 5. The Netherlands has also decided to contribute to the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) concerning women and peace and security and to focus on gender issues in all areas of foreign policy.

## 3. Overview of the international gender agenda

14. Much has been achieved over the past decades in terms of standards and international policy guidelines. But looking at the daily reality of the lives of many women, it has to be concluded that this is by no means enough. Our focus on gender equality is based on both a human rights perspective and the objective to increase women's opportunities. They are inextricably linked: women's rights without opportunities will not bring closer equal rights, nor will opportunities lead to results when women do not have basic rights.

15. Apart from the paragraph in the Emancipation Policy 2008-2011, the international gender policy of the Netherlands, which is outlined below, has been incorporated and elaborated on in the following policy documents:

- *Our Common Concern: Investing in Development in a Changing World*, policy brief to Parliament, October 2007

  Gender equality and sexual and reproductive health and rights were named as priority and one of the four areas of intensification, with an additional budget of €120 million.

- *Human Dignity for All, a Human Rights Strategy for Foreign Policy*, 2007

- *Dutch National Action Plan on Resolution 1325, Taking a Stand for Women, Peace and Security*, 2007

- *Agriculture, Rural Economic Development and Food Security in Developing Countries*, 2008

- *Choices and Opportunities, HIV/AIDS and Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights in Foreign Policy*, 2009

- *Working together on global challenges: The Netherlands and multilateral development cooperation*, 2009

- *Cooperation, Customization and Added Value*, 2009.

### 3.1. Guaranteeing a structural focus on the position of women in developing countries

16. The Netherlands subscribes to the operational framework designed by the United Nations Millennium Project Task Force on Education and Gender Equality[5] focusing on (a) capabilities (education, health and nutrition), (b) access to resources and opportunities and (c) security. It has adopted the seven priority areas to monitor progress in the implementation of Goal 3 and Goal 5, whereby Goal 5 has been identified as a priority area by itself.

[5] Task Force on Education and Gender Equality, *Taking Action: Achieving Gender Equality and Empowering Women, Achieving the Millennium Development Goals*, United Nations Millennium Project, 2005.

*3.1.1. Strengthen opportunities for post-primary education for girls while simultaneously meeting commitments to universal primary education*[6]

17. The Netherlands spends €592 million or 12.8 per cent of its development budget on education. Special attention is given to strengthening the participation of girls in basic, secondary and tertiary education. Support is provided through sector planning, for example in the Education for All/Fast Track Initiative but also to regional non-governmental organizations such as the Forum for African Women Educationalists.

18. At the country level interventions can vary from development and implementation of a gender-responsive pedagogy model, to ensuring that specific hygiene facilities are available for girls at the school location or the availability of scholarships/bursaries for girls. Dialogue with partner Governments has enabled teenage mothers to enter or return to secondary schools (Zambia). Surveys and data systems have become gender specific, thus able to provide evidence on girls' performances in the education system.

19. One of the main constraining factors in the education of girls is the increasing violence against girls at all educational levels. Violence occurs on the way to school, but also in school by male teachers in primary, secondary and tertiary education and violence by fellow male students. The challenge to reach gender parity in education is to be found in addressing the issue of violence.

**Supporting education for girls**

The Netherlands supports a fund in Burkina Faso that pays for teaching materials and latrines, enabling younger girls to go to school. It has also enabled some countries to introduce scholarships for girls (Burkina Faso, Kenya, Mozambique and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) and for specific target groups: single mothers (Bolivia); female victims of the conflict in northern Uganda (Uganda); 600 female pupils who are staying at home to care for parents with AIDS (South Africa). In addition to the scholarship, social workers ensure that they can continue going to school. Various forms of adult education have been set up, for example in Yemen, where there is a programme offering basic training to young unskilled women. In Zambia the Netherlands supports the national chapter of the Forum for African Women Educationalists, which is implementing a wide range of activities to keep girls at school. These activities are, for example, organizing safe housing for young girls who want to attend secondary schools that have no boarding facilities, encouraging schools to become centres of excellence by having better gender-friendly facilities, to teach a gender-friendly curriculum, by having teachers who are trained in gender responsive pedagogy. The Forum for African Women Educationalists Zambia advises the Government and particularly the Ministry of Education in aspects of mainstreaming gender.

[6] For the purpose of this report, the exact terminology of the Task Force on Education and Gender Equality has been applied.

*3.1.2. Invest in infrastructure to reduce women's and girls' time burdens*

20. Dutch support includes building infrastructure which will provide 50 million people with clean drinking water and 10 million people with renewable energy in several countries. Sustainable drinking water facilities require more than infrastructure alone, however. The Netherlands is emphasizing that the specific needs of women are taken into account in the design and implementation of water programmes (Bangladesh, Indonesia, Viet Nam and Suriname). In Indonesia, a group of women have succeeded in arranging for investments earmarked for road-building and irrigation to be diverted to the construction of public lavatories and wash places.

21. The Development-related Infrastructure Facility (ORIO) is a Dutch fund with a budget of €805 million in 2009-2013 for the design, implementation (construction), operation and maintenance of public infrastructure in developing countries. Gender equality is taken into account as one of the selection criteria. Gender indicators for monitoring and evaluation within the ORIO programme are being formulated.

22. Investments in clean drinking water must be accompanied by investments in energy provisions. In December 2009 DGIS, SNV and HIVOS signed the African Biogas Partnership Programme. During the period 2009-2013, a total of more than 70,000 households in six African countries (Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Kenya, Senegal, Uganda and United Republic of Tanzania) will be equipped with domestic biogas installations. Experiences from HIVOS in Cambodia (3,000 biogas installations) show that the programme is having a major positive impact on women, who no longer need to spend as much time or money organizing the collection of firewood or other fuels. A major secondary benefit is the reduction of health problems associated with traditional wood-fired stoves.

*3.1.3. Guarantee women's and girls' property and inheritance rights*

23. The legal and policy environment generally shows that while land laws and policies are critical for the promotion of women's land rights, other relevant laws — related to inheritance, family status and domestic violence — are equally critical. In Bangladesh and in Bolivia, many women have acquired titles to land through activities supported by Dutch embassies. Obtaining rights to land strengthens women's status and gives them collateral for credit.

24. To ensure that equal rights are upheld, institutions need to have the capacity for enforcement. The Netherlands Institute for Southern Africa is doing relevant research in sub-Saharan Africa and using the findings for training and awareness-raising, advocacy, and supporting networks of women farmers. In Mexico, Uganda and India, national non-governmental organizations are implementing activities regarding property and inheritance rights. The Netherlands also supports a FAO project in Mozambique that trains judges and government officials at decentralized level in sustainable legislation and rights for women. These developments strengthen social structures and contribute to the acceptance of women's rights and their right to self-determination.

*3.1.4. Eliminate gender inequality in employment*

25. The Netherlands has contributed to improvements in legislation on secondary terms of employment such as maternity leave (United Republic of Tanzania,

Yemen), childcare, working hours, pensions (Yemen), safe transport (Pakistan), and training in non-traditional forms of employment in the productive and services sectors (Bolivia). It also contributes to the promotion of formal and equal employment for adolescent women through ITUC (International Trade Union Confederation). According to ITUC the pay gap between men and women worldwide may be much higher than official government figures indicate. Reasons include overt as well as subtle discrimination against women in the labour market and the workplace. Especially in the private sector, women are at a disadvantage through the system of promotions, lack of maternity protection and provisions for parental leave of men and women.

26. Priority is given to the provision of microcredit to women. Organizations such as Promoter in Bolivia, CrediMujer in Peru and MicroStart in Burkina Faso cater exclusively to women with Dutch support. The Netherlands also finances the Women's World Banking network, which now has 54 microcredit agencies and banks in 30 countries benefiting 21 million microentrepreneurs. In the United Republic of Tanzania, the size of the loans awarded to women increases their workload but is not enough to lift them out of poverty. As a result, the women are confined to small-scale activities in the informal sector and have to work harder to generate a modest increase in revenue.

### *3.1.5. Increase women's share of seats in national parliaments and local governmental bodies*

27. Although the Beijing Platform for Action recommends that Governments allocate 30 per cent of their parliamentary seats to women, only a few partner countries have realized this objective. Over recent years, the Netherlands has invested both in supporting Governments of partner countries to achieve the goal of equal participation of men and women in decision-making, and in strengthening women's individual capacities to facilitate their participation in the political domain. Women have become more self-reliant by obtaining knowledge about the rights of women in politics, finding out how to present a political argument, and establishing networks on which they can fall back following setbacks, such as intimidation by conservative opponents.

28. Community-level participation often acts as a springboard for women's involvement in the wider political domain. This is the case in Pakistan, Indonesia and Bangladesh, where women are represented on water management committees and parent-teacher associations. Other steps towards cultural change have been achieved through the influence of the media. In Egypt, a women's organization set up a unit to monitor violations of women's rights in the media. As a result, media employees have become far more sensitive to gender aspects, and this has led to a public debate on the participation of women in politics.

### *3.1.6. Combat violence against women and girls*

29. The Netherlands sponsors norm-setting activities via the United Nations, such as the annual French-Netherlands resolutions on violence against women. It makes annual financial contributions to the United Nations Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women, managed by UNIFEM. It contributed to the establishment of a United Nations databank with regard to violence against women, through a financial contribution to the Division for the Advancement of

Women of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs. The database, online since the beginning of 2009, gives an outline of legal provisions and best practices in more than 100 countries. It is an important source of inspiration for policymakers and lobbying groups around the world.

30. In eight partner countries for development cooperation and seven other countries, the Netherlands supports national Governments and non-governmental organizations, sometimes with other partners, in their efforts to eradicate violence against women. Activities include adoption of relevant legislation (Bangladesh, Ghana and Mozambique); reversing impunity (Guatemala, Nicaragua); supporting training programmes for law enforcement officials; strengthening civil society organizations; training media on gender-based violence; and supporting awareness-raising programmes in the private sector. In countries such as Ethiopia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the Netherlands works closely with UNFPA and UNDP to prevent gender-related violence, to make it a criminal offence at the national level and to support active prosecution and victim aid. A recently composed manual on monitoring and reporting about violence against women is being used in partner countries and by the Division for the Advancement of Women.

31. In several Central American countries serious acts of violence against women, including femicide, take place. Therefore, the Netherlands supported a regional conference to facilitate and encourage cooperation between Governments and embassies, Dutch and local non-governmental organizations with the aim of eliminating violence against women. In other countries, such as Morocco and the Syrian Arab Republic, the Netherlands promotes legal change and supports the construction and upkeep of safe houses.

32. Many African countries have taken successful initiatives to launch campaigns and set up special programmes to end female genital mutilation. Research showed that existing social norms are obstacles to realizing this aim. Eradication requires a coordinated intervention undertaken by a sufficient proportion of families at the same time. Through migration of African women the practice of female genital mutilation and the related context of social norms have migrated with them, literally and figuratively. The Netherlands considers female genital mutilation as a serious violation of the rights of the girl child and made the practice illegal in the 1990s. Several ministries collaborate together to end this practice. The Netherlands looks at best practices in African countries. This approach was presented during an international conference on female genital mutilation held in The Hague in November 2009. It is an example of so-called development cooperation in reverse, an element of the Netherlands new-style development cooperation policies. Recently the European Commission presented a proposal for a multidisciplinary package of actions on ending female genital mutilation which may lead to European harmonization in this field.

### *3.1.7. Millennium Development Goal 3 Fund: investing in equality*[7]

33. The Netherlands recognizes that women themselves can be the most important agents of change and that it is therefore of the utmost importance to support civil society organizations to promote and support women's rights and opportunities. In

[7] The Millennium Development Goal 3 Fund was not recommended by the Task Force on Education and Gender Equality, but was set up at the initiative of the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

order to empower women and stimulate them to organize national discussions the Netherlands has established the Millennium Development Goal 3 Fund "Invest in Equality" to improve the rights and opportunities for women and girls with a total budget of €70 million for the period 2008-2011.

34. It was received with an overwhelming response: 454 applications were submitted worldwide, many of them of high quality. The available budget forced the Government to make choices: 45 activities qualified for funding. These activities focus on property and inheritance rights for women; gender equality in employment and equal opportunities in the labour market; participation and representation of women in national parliaments and political bodies; and combating violence against women. Almost all 45 activities are on track and are showing interesting results. The overwhelming response to the establishment of the Millennium Development Goal 3 Fund and the success of the activities funded underscore the unmet need for funding of non-governmental organizations in the field of gender equality and women's empowerment.

### 3.2. Guaranteeing sexual and reproductive health and rights*

35. For the Netherlands, a reduction in maternal mortality as well as the availability of reproductive health for everyone is a key objective in foreign policy. The strategy for sexual and reproductive health and rights and HIV/AIDS, which continues to build upon the 1994 Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, was published in 2009 under the title *Choices and Opportunities*. Important components include a rights-based approach, a focus on prevention, attention to the situation of vulnerable groups and the situation of young people. The policy specifically aims at a reduction of maternal mortality and morbidity. The lack of progress in these areas is a reason for major concern.

36. Owing in part to Dutch efforts, an additional target for sexual and reproductive health and rights has been included under Millennium Development Goal 5, universal access to reproductive health by 2015. The Netherlands is rallying support among donors, non-governmental organizations and recipient countries for increased investments in sexual and reproductive health and rights. Together with UNFPA, the Netherlands organized a high-level meeting on maternal health and Millennium Development Goal 5 in October 2009. The meeting resulted in the adoption of the Addis Call to Urgent Action for Maternal Health, which includes an appeal to focus on the needs of adolescents and to prioritize investment in family planning. In order to make a serious contribution to meeting the unmet need for family planning the Dutch contribution to the Global Programme on Reproductive Health Commodity Security was increased to €30 million per year.

37. Given the fact that an estimated 15 per cent of maternal mortality is caused by unsafe abortion, the Netherlands finds it of the utmost importance to address the issue of access to safe abortion. It does so through political dialogue as well by actively supporting organizations promoting and/or providing access to safe abortion services. These include the Concept Foundation, Marie Stopes International and Ipas. Through different channels, the Netherlands contributes to the reinforcement of basic health systems, including midwifery training, integration of sexual and reproductive health and rights and HIV/AIDS in service delivery and efforts to reduce the feminization of the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

---

* This recommendation of the Task Force on Education and Gender Equality has been singled out by the Netherlands as a separate area of concern.

### 3.3. Guaranteeing systematic attention to the effects of international peace missions on local women and giving thought, where necessary, to the composition of the team to be sent

38. The Netherlands invests considerably in women and peace and security. Involvement of and input by women is essential in interventions aimed at ending conflicts and increasing security, stability and human security globally. The Dutch National Action Plan 2008-2011 on resolution 1325 (2000) was adopted in December 2007. Joint investments under the Plan by Government and civil society amount to €23 million (including €15 million from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, coordinator of the Action Plan). Cooperation between the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Defence has furthermore resulted in the incorporation of gender in the assessment framework for Dutch input in operations. Through the activities under the National Action Plan the Netherlands contributes to the participation of women in peace negotiations and demobilization programmes. In addition, special attention is given to gender dimensions in humanitarian assistance and reconstruction.

39. For short-term deployment in areas of conflict gender experts are actively recruited. That has for example led to the selection of a Dutch expert on sexual violence against women, who was seconded to the European Union police mission in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo earlier in 2010. The Netherlands has played a key role in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in addressing impunity with regard to sexual violence. It supports several initiatives, including implementation of the United Nations comprehensive approach on sexual violence. Specific attention to the integration of women in reconstruction processes is encouraged in Dutch bilateral interventions in fragile States including the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Burundi, the Sudan and Afghanistan. The Netherlands co-sponsored Security Council resolution 1820 (2008), condemning sexual violence as weapon of war, in June 2008. Finally, the Netherlands also co-sponsored Security Council resolutions 1888 (2009) and 1889 (2009) concerning women and peace and security in October 2009.

40. In cooperation with Norway, Finland and Sweden, the Netherlands commissioned a study to review the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) in Afghanistan. It resulted in concrete recommendations to NATO on how to incorporate a women's perspective on peace and security into NATO operations.

**Promoting Afghan women's political participation**

Collaboration between the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Gender Concerns International (a Dutch non-governmental organization), the Institute of Inclusive Security (a United States non-governmental organization), the United States Department of State and UNIFEM made it possible to have Afghan women participate in and address the audience of the London Conference on the future of Afghanistan. The Netherlands Government considers this a first step to ensuring that Afghan women can participate in all the political decision-making events regarding the future of their country.

### 3.4. Structural focus on improving the position of women in all international areas of policy

41. In 2004 and 2005 a committee established by the Government of the Netherlands reviewed progress in gender mainstreaming in various ministries, including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Appreciation was expressed for the integration of a gender perspective in development cooperation, which could act as a role model for other ministries. However, in other areas of foreign policy, the development of a gender perspective was recommended. This conclusion was also adopted by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women in its concluding observations of February 2010.

42. In the meantime, the Netherlands has become very active in the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security. Human rights have become a priority issue for the Minister for Foreign Affairs. Women's rights figure prominently in the current human rights strategy, which applies to all areas of foreign policy. An analysis has been planned of all relevant files within the European context to assess how the Netherlands can make an effective contribution to gender equality in European Union development cooperation, trade and the European foreign and security policy. Within the European Union, the Netherlands supports the adoption and implementation of the European Union Action Plan on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in External Affairs. It has also welcomed the establishment of the European Institute for Gender Equality.

43. The Netherlands also looks at possible ways to reinforce interaction between national and international policy. Where possible, it would like to use internationally developed indicators to monitor progress in the Netherlands. Reporting obligations under international treaties and/or conventions are used to evaluate or adjust existing policies. The importance of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women as a basis for domestic policies and in the dialogue with other countries/organizations on gender equality is still indisputable.

44. The United Nations system has a crucial role to play in the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment. One powerful United Nations gender agency would facilitate and support this important role. The Netherlands is strongly committed to reforming the United Nations gender architecture and ensuring that the new gender organization will be operational as soon as possible. Once the entity is operational, the Netherlands will double its current core funding for the work of the United Nations in this field through the newly established organization.

## 4. Lessons learned and challenges ahead

### 4.1. Lessons learned

45. The first United Nations Women's Conference was held in Mexico City in 1975. Fifteen years after the fourth Conference, at which the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action were signed, and 10 years after the adoption of the Millennium Development Goals, it is clear that much has been achieved and important progress made. Nowadays, there is ample proof that the promotion of gender equality is one of the most powerful forces of change. Through gender equality the achievement of many social and economic goals of today can be

accelerated. So we can move beyond the "why" of gender equality and can focus on the "how". At the same time this has not yet resulted in real changes in policies. Goal 3 and Goal 5 still remain the Millennium Development Goals where least progress is made. In many countries policymakers are still unaware of the challenges, unsure of what to do, or neglectful of core public issues.[9] Gender mainstreaming, in vogue at the turn of the millennium, has too often resulted in gender "away streaming". So we have learned that more is needed to get to a new level and make real progress. We have concluded that goals can be met provided there is a combination of political will, leadership and commitment at the highest level, expertise, a clear policy and adequate funding. For this reason the Netherlands has identified gender equality as a core objective of government policy. We have invested in training staff to be more gender sensitive. We have asked staff and partners to formulate concrete policies and interventions, leading to tangible results. And we have made available €308 million in additional resources for the period 2008-2011. Of this amount €173 million goes to sexual and reproductive health and rights. In addition to these funds the Netherlands contributed in the period 2008-2009 almost €10 million to the United Nations Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women and €2 million to UNIFEM.

46. Currently we are reviewing progress made.

### 4.2. Challenges ahead

47. The promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment is still a difficult message to sell. There are several pervasive biases in the discourse. First of all people, men and women alike, are tempted to look at gender equality as a women's issue only. This disregards the fact that this is a social issue, with wide-ranging effects for all people in society. Second, women are easily portrayed as victims only. Women continue to be regarded as a possible, but optional, target group that needs help. Somehow many people still have difficulty in seeing women as actors in their own right, as the other half of humanity, who can contribute just as much to the improvement of society as the male half. Third, there is a bias towards thinking that "gender neutral" developments, policies and interventions which aim equally at men and women exist.[10] There is no such thing. On the contrary, "gender neutral" policies tend to strengthen male dominance to the detriment of women.

48. Consequently, considerable energy is needed time and again at all levels to justify interventions designed to reach aims and objectives that were agreed upon internationally years ago. Over the last few years, several new initiatives have been taken to break through the image of "gender fatigue", to show that the future of humanity lies with the active empowerment of women and the improvement of gender equality. The challenge is to show that these are not mere words, but that real and sustainable change can come out of it.

---

[9] The so-called policy of neglect, according to Jeffrey Sachs in the Millennium Project.

[10] A gender perspective is absent in the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the Accra Agenda for Action.

United Nations E/2010/63

# Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
7 May 2010

Original: English

**Substantive session of 2010**
New York, 28 June-2 July 2010
Item 2 (c) of the provisional agenda*
**High-level segment: annual ministerial review**

## Letter dated 5 May 2010 from the Permanent Representative of Australia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Economic and Social Council

I have the honour of transmitting the voluntary national presentation of Australia entitled "Implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to gender equality and the empowerment of women" for the annual ministerial review to be held during the high-level segment of the substantive session of 2010 of the Economic and Social Council (see annex).

I would be grateful if you would circulate the present letter and attached report as a document of the Council.

(*Signed*) Gary **Quinlan**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

* E/2010/100.

10-35461 (E) 270510

Please recycle

**Annex to the letter dated 5 May 2010 from the Permanent Representative of Australia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Economic and Social Council**

# Voluntary national presentation of Australia: implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments on gender equality and the empowerment of women

## Contents


| | | Page |
|---|---|---|
| A. | Introduction | 3 |
| B. | Importance of gender equality and women's empowerment | 3 |
| C. | What is Australia doing? | 4 |
| D. | Closing the gender gap | 6 |
| E. | Gender equality and the Millennium Development Goals | 8 |
| F. | Delivering better aid | 16 |
| G. | Meeting the challenge ahead | 19 |

## A. Introduction

1. In 2000, Australia joined many countries around the world to pledge support to halve extreme poverty in the world by 2015. Australia is working to help developing countries to accelerate their progress towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. To do this, Australia's aid is being substantially increased. Over the past six years, it has increased by 70 per cent, to $3.8 billion. On current projections, it will more than double by 2015.

2. Australia is committed to development for all, recognizing that both men and women have a role to play in all aspects of development, and to ensuring that the needs, priorities and interests of women as well as men are part of the development process. It believes that advancing gender equality and supporting women's full participation in economic, social and political life are development goals in their own right, and an essential element for achieving all Millennium Development Goals.

## B. Importance of gender equality and women's empowerment

3. The year 2010 marks 10 years of efforts towards realizing the Millennium Development Goals. It also marks the fifteenth anniversary of the convening of the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995 and the commitment made by world leaders to advance women's rights by means of the Beijing Platform for Action. As such, 2010 is a milestone for the international community and an opportunity to reflect on the world's contribution to improving gender equality and the lives of women around the globe. Australia participated in the 15-year review of the Beijing Platform for Action which highlighted the key achievements and challenges remaining if the international community were to advance the goals of gender equality and women's empowerment.[1]

4. There remain many challenges to achieving gender equality. Overall, economic opportunities for women still lag behind those of men. Women earn 75 per cent of what male co-workers earn, a difference that cannot be explained solely by the amount of schooling or experience. In many countries women have fewer educational and employment opportunities than do men, are often denied access to finance, and endure social restrictions that limit their chances for advancement. In some developing countries women still cannot vote, own property or venture outside the home without a male family member.

5. Despite the huge challenges, the risks of inaction are immense. A lack of progress in advancing gender equality and empowering women will hinder global progress in meeting each of the Millennium Development Goals. For instance, international evidence suggests that stalled progress in girls' secondary schooling means foregone reductions in fertility, maternal mortality, child mortality, malnutrition and other impediments to economic growth.[2] Furthermore, a lack of gender parity in primary and secondary schooling can lead to lost wages, reduced

[1] See the statement of Australia to the Commission on the Status of Women at its fifty-fourth session, New York, 3 March 2010. Available from www.australiaun.org/unny/100303_Third_CSW.html (accessed April 2010).

[2] United Nations Children's Fund, *The State of the World's Children 2007: Women and Children, the Double Dividend of Gender Equality* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.07.XX.1).

labour force participation and lower productivity. It can also lead to higher rates of child mortality, malnutrition and maternal mortality among less educated women, and an increase in the incidence of HIV/AIDS. In addition, violence against women underlies many of these challenges and is an obstacle to closing the gender gap and making progress towards achieving all of the Millennium Development Goals.[3]

## C. What is Australia doing?

6. Australia has made a lot of progress over the past few years on improving gender equality; however, it recognizes that more progress must be made. Nevertheless, its experience and the lessons it has learned, as well as its gender research capacity, are important resources that we are sharing with the growing number of countries with which Australia now has development partnerships.

### Broadening the scope: making a greater contribution to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals

7. Australia is one of the few major donors located in an area of largely developing countries. Given its location, the core of Australia's development assistance is devoted to helping its neighbours in the Asian and Pacific regions.

8. The Asian and Pacific regions have made progress towards realizing Millennium Development Goal 3, particularly in narrowing gender gaps in primary and secondary education and raising literacy rates. However, the progress made in respect of the indicators of economic and political empowerment under Goal 3 has been mixed, and most countries are not reducing maternal mortality rates fast enough under Millennium Development Goal 5. The Millennium Development Goal 3 target of gender parity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, has already been missed.

9. Australia is also responding to global efforts to accelerate progress towards achievement of the Millennium Development Goals by expanding its aid programme further into Africa, and into Latin America and the Caribbean.

### Papua New Guinea and Pacific island countries

10. Australia has an important role to play in helping Pacific island countries accelerate their progress towards the Millennium Development Goals, and it recognizes that new approaches to development are required. Australia is the largest bilateral donor to the Pacific region, providing $1 billion in aid flows in 2009/10.

11. The Pacific Partnerships for Development initiative, launched by Prime Minister Kevin Rudd in 2008, marks a new era in relationships with Pacific Governments and is a commitment to work as partners to achieve shared goals, such as improved access to quality education, health services, private sector growth and employment.

---

[3] United Nations Development Fund for Women, 2008. *Gender Equality Now: Accelerating the Achievement of the Millennium Development Goals* (New York, 2008).

### Asia

12. In South and East Asia, Australia is playing a leadership role in areas in which it has experience and expertise. This includes supporting the policy objectives of partner countries by building their capacity and strengthening their systems. For example, in the education sector in Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic and the Philippines, Australia is contributing to improving access to education (particularly for girls), building learning facilities and improving the quality of education. In Viet Nam, where a lack of toilets and hand-washing facilities in homes and at schools seriously affects the health of children, particularly in rural areas, it is working to improve water and sanitation facilities.[4] Australia is supporting rural development and improved food security in Cambodia, where women represent approximately 78 per cent of the agricultural workforce.[5] Good feedback on what works — and what does not — is key to strengthening public policy and programming in the region and supporting efforts to ensure that development benefits everyone.

### Afghanistan and Pakistan

13. Militancy and extremism significantly constrain sustainable and broad-based development in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Australia recently doubled its aid programme in Pakistan, to $120 million over two years. Australia is supporting service delivery in health and education, improvement in rural livelihoods and strengthening of democratic governance, particularly in the border regions with Afghanistan; this work will be guided by the Australia-Pakistan Development Partnership.

14. Australia's programme in Afghanistan is helping to improve the lives of women and girls who have been systematically discriminated against and marginalized and who have had their basic human rights violated under the Taliban regime. Australia supports country-wide services which benefit women and institutions that promote women's rights. These include health clinics targeting safe motherhood programmes through antenatal, post-natal and children's health support, and support for the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission which promotes and protects women's rights through advocacy, training and education. Australia also supports the active economic participation of Afghan women through microfinance initiatives. More than 440,000 Afghans are now accessing microfinance services across 24 provinces, and 64 per cent of these clients are female.

### Africa

15. Australia has committed to broadening and deepening its engagement with Africa across the full spectrum of the relationship — trade and investment, peace and security, and humanitarian and development assistance. With about 50 per cent of sub-Saharan Africans living in extreme poverty and the region being the most off track measured against all of the Millennium Development Goals, Australia has increased its aid programme to Africa by 40 per cent over the past year, to $163.9 million. In its work, Australia draws on its unique experience and expertise

[4] See http://sanitationupdates.wordpress.com/tag/children/ (accessed April 2010).

[5] See www.fao.org/docrep/008/af348e/af348e06.htm (accessed April 2010).

in food security and agriculture, maternal and child health, water and sanitation and human resource capacity, all priorities if African countries are to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. Australia's expertise in agricultural research and domestic market reform will contribute considerably to increasing food security in Africa, where between 60 and 80 per cent of agricultural workers are women.[6]

**Latin America and the Caribbean**

16. Despite promising trends in many areas, particularly in education enrolment and access to reproductive health, the Latin America and Caribbean region is at risk of not achieving a number of the Millennium Development Goals, including the goal to halve extreme hunger and poverty and ensure environmental sustainability.[7]

17. Australia is expanding its aid engagement in Latin America and the Caribbean. In Latin America, Australia has committed $4 million to support microfinance initiatives in Colombia and Peru.

18. Australia is also putting in place a new package of short and long-term scholarships. Trilateral cooperation — where a traditional donor partners with an emerging donor to help a third country — is a focus of its approach to development assistance in this region. Australia is pursuing such cooperation with Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Chile and Mexico. It also committed $5 million in response to the massive earthquake and tsunami that struck the Chilean coast in February 2010.

19. The earthquake in Haiti on 12 January 2010 is evidence of the Caribbean region's vulnerability to natural disasters. Australia's new $60 million development partnership with the members of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) is based on building regional resilience and supporting small island States in addressing the threats of natural disasters and climate change.

## D. Closing the gender gap

20. Most, if not all, developing countries struggle to provide women with access to the most basic rights and services, and so severe gender inequalities persist. Gender gaps are very real impediments to sustainable development.

21. Even in countries in which progress has been made and trends are generally positive, there is no room for complacency. Many of Australia's development partners still fall in the bottom half of United Nations tables measuring various aspects of gender equality. Progress tends to slow as quick-win opportunities for closing gender gaps in these countries become fewer. The remaining gender inequalities and constraints become harder to overcome and require more sophisticated analysis, innovative and targeted interventions, and intensified support for the governmental and non-governmental stakeholders driving the change.

22. Finally, some countries have made significant progress and are introducing their own institutions and processes to integrate gender equality, although these are

[6] See www.ifpri.org/publication/women-s-participation-agricultural-research-and-higher-education-key-trends-sub-saharan-> (accessed April 2010).

[7] United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, *The Millennium Development Goals Report 2009* (July 2009). Available from www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/MDG%20Report%202009%20ENG.pdf (accessed May 2010).

often embryonic and still weak. Australia is working with these countries to help strengthen these systems.

23. In response to these challenges, Australia is helping to narrow the gender gap through targeted assistance to address persistent barriers to gender equality. This includes making a substantial contribution to ending violence against women in our region by contributing to the evidence base for policy action and supporting a framework for implementation.

**Addressing persistent barriers: making the case and taking action to end violence against women**

Violence against women, and the fear of violence, are significant human rights violations. Without strong global action, the social, political and economic participation of women in many communities will continue to be severely limited by violence.

Developed countries, including Australia, still face this challenge. Nearly one in three Australian women experience physical violence and almost one in five will experience sexual violence in their lifetime. Australia is taking a comprehensive approach domestically and through its international aid effort.

In the Pacific region, Australian research found violence against women was pervasive and severe. *Violence against Women in Melanesia and East Timor: Building on Global and Regional Approaches*, a report published by AusAID November 2008, contained an assessment of the effectiveness of methods being used to address violence against women in Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Timor-Leste and Vanuatu, and painted a detailed picture of promising practices being used to prevent and respond to violence against women. A report released in response, *Stop Violence: Responding to Violence against Women in Melanesia and East Timor*, sets out Australia's priorities and actions to combat violence against women in these countries. The report focuses on three main strategies — improving women's access to justice, increasing women's access to support services and preventing violence against women.

Australia is putting these strategies into practice. For example, under the Papua New Guinea-Australia Law and Justice Programme, it is supporting an urban safety initiative, *Yumi Lukautim Mosbi* (Let's Look After Moresby), which, among other things, aims to improve safety for women and children. If women or children are in crisis, they can call the 24-hour free hotline and if necessary a security vehicle will be sent which can take them to a safe place. The Programme has also funded dedicated crisis shelters for women and children who are victims of violence.

Australia recognizes that ending violence against women requires a long-term commitment and is intensifying its efforts to respond. This includes building on its existing work in health and education and expanding its work with men and boys. Men and boys have a crucial role to play if the world is to end violence against women and Australia

supports community-based initiatives in this area. For example, it supports the Association of Men against Violence of Timor-Leste, a community-based education programme designed to raise awareness and change permissive attitudes towards violence against women.

While Australia's response in the Pacific focuses on domestic violence and sexual assault, it recognizes that women face a broader spectrum of violence and is addressing all forms of violence through its aid programme. In 2009, Australia co-sponsored Security Council resolution 1888 (2009), which led to the appointment of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on sexual violence in armed conflict. This global action complements Australia's ongoing efforts to reduce the incidence of sexual violence in armed conflict at the country level, such as in northern Iraq where its support to the International Rescue Committee provides services for victims of gender-based violence.

## E. Gender equality and the Millennium Development Goals

24. Australia integrates gender equality across all areas of the aid programme and is working to ensure there are equal opportunities to participate at all levels of education, that women and girls have equal access to appropriate health care, and that women have equal opportunities to participate in the economy and hold leadership positions.

### Millennium Development Goal 1: Eradicate extreme hunger and poverty

25. Australia is committed to reducing the number of people who live in hunger and poverty, and to achieving full employment for all.

26. Promoting shared and sustained economic growth is a powerful long-term path to poverty reduction. Investments in infrastructure, rural development, land reform and microfinance all support increased economic growth and opportunities for the poor.

27. For example, Australia is helping developing countries to increase their agricultural productivity through research and development, by strengthening agricultural markets and by promoting enterprise development. It is also supporting social safety net programmes that reduce the vulnerability of the poor to high food prices and other shocks.

28. Australia contributed $50 million to the World Bank's Food Crisis Response Programme, which is building social safety net programmes in Cambodia, Kiribati, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Solomon Islands, Viet Nam and Zimbabwe. Australia is also spending an additional $464 million during the period 2009-2013 on agricultural development to address the food crisis and long-term food security issues in Asia, the Pacific and Africa.

29. Women are less likely than men to be in paid employment. In many countries, women have restricted access to land and property, and face difficulty in accessing formal credit. Microfinance gives women options for improving their livelihoods,

including setting up businesses and investing in education and health. This can help build women's self-confidence and assertiveness, often enabling them to obtain greater decision-making power, control over assets, and mobility within their households and in the broader community.

**Putting it into practice**

30. Australia is providing $49.1 million in Bangladesh during the period 2007-2012 to assist the work of BRAC, which supports women living in extreme poverty. BRAC is the largest non-governmental organization in Bangladesh and its programme, Challenging the Frontiers of Poverty Reduction, is designed to lift more than 3 million extremely poor people out of poverty by 2012. The programme is targeted at women, many of them single but with responsibility for feeding the whole family. The programme seeks to support ultra-poor women in establishing small businesses and to earn an income by providing productive assets, such as cows or goats; delivering intensive training to ensure an income stream from those productive assets; and providing a regular cash stipend until their new small business creates a stable livelihood. In the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Papua New Guinea, Australia is supporting the World Bank's adolescent girls initiative by advancing the economic empowerment of adolescent girls as they move from education to employment. The initiative is helping girls to complete their education, develop skills that match market demand, and find mentors and job placements.

31. In Colombia and Peru, Australia is working with the Inter-American Development Bank to empower women through microfinance. It is providing $2 million to support 100,000 Peruvian women entrepreneurs through training, networking and mentoring, arming them with the management skills and confidence required to develop more sustainable and profitable businesses.

**Millennium Development Goal 2: Achieve universal primary education**

32. Australia is working to ensure that all girls and boys are able to complete primary school and to improve the literacy rates of young women and men.

33. Women and girls are much less likely to complete primary school and go on to higher levels of education. Ensuring that girls as well as boys are able to attend school is a crucial part of reducing poverty and achieving sustainable development. It means that both women and men will be equipped with the knowledge and skills to contribute to their society.

34. Australia recognizes that education, particularly that of women and girls, yields some of the highest returns of all development investments. This is why education is a key element of the Australian aid programme.

35. Included in Australian-funded education programmes are specific measures to:

(a) Enable more girls to enter school by building schools and improving infrastructure in a range of countries, including Indonesia and the Philippines;

(b) Reduce gender stereotyping in learning materials and methods through curriculum reforms, such as those being undertaken in Vanuatu through the Vanuatu Education Sector Action Plan;

(c) Improve the gender balance in teaching workforces by focusing on gender equality in teacher training programmes, such as those under way in Bangladesh;

(d) Empower women to play a greater role in the management of education through school-based management programmes, including in the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Papua New Guinea.

**Putting it into practice**

36. Australia is supporting the building or extension of 2,075 junior secondary schools and *Madrasah Tsanawiyah* (Islamic junior secondary schools) in Indonesia through funding of $387 million over five years.

37. These schools are providing education to the poorest and most disadvantaged Indonesian children, particularly girls. The schools are creating an additional 300,000 places and helping the Indonesian Government to meet its target for all children to receive nine years of education by 2010.

38. The schools are being built to accommodate the particular needs of various groups of children, for example, through disability-inclusive design and the provision of separate toilet facilities for girls and boys.

**Scholarships**

39. Building technical and political leaders in developing countries is fundamental to the success of development efforts. Scholarships first became a component of Australia's overseas aid programme in the 1950s and continue to be important to this day. Australia provides approximately $150 million a year for scholarships for people from Asia, the Pacific and Africa.

40. Women often face specific barriers to participation in scholarship programmes owing to lower levels of education and/or English, family roles and responsibilities, and social and cultural expectations. Australia's scholarships programme works to overcome these barriers through a range of strategies, such as additional English language training or academic preparation, providing funds for a travelling companion to accompany women applicants to tests, and specifically targeting women through promotional activities.

**Putting it into practice**

41. In 2009, Savina Nongebatu was one of seven women from disabled people's organizations who were recipients of the Australian Leadership Awards Fellowships. This programme enhances leadership skills, professional development and networking skills for disabled people's organizations in Asia and the Pacific. At the launch of the strategy paper entitled "Development for All: A Disability Strategy for the Australian Aid Programme 2009-2014", in December 2008, Ms. Nongebatu, stated that as a woman with disability, heading an advocacy organization of and for people with disability in Solomon Islands — a post-conflict nation — on a volunteer basis, it was crucial to provide specific training of leaders with disabilities, especially girls and women, and that support for women leaders and potential leaders must be explored fully.

**Millennium Development Goal 3: Promote gender equality and empower women**

42. Australia recognizes that achieving equality between women and men is crucial if poverty is to be reduced and all people are able to fully participate in their communities. Australia recognizes that strengthening women's leadership role, including in national parliaments, to advance gender equality, is an important step towards their achieving economic participation in society. This includes ensuring that both women and men hold positions as leaders in their communities, that they participate equally in all levels of education, and that they are able to undertake paid employment on an equal basis.

43. Internationally, the United Nations has recorded that women hold only 18.5 per cent of parliamentary seats and that in some countries there are no women in parliament. The percentage of women in national parliaments has increased slightly in the past decade, however, the rate of progress remains unacceptably slow. It is estimated that few countries will achieve a critical mass of 30 per cent of women in parliament by 2015 and it may take another 40 years for women to constitute 40 per cent of parliamentary representation in developing regions.[8]

44. In the Pacific, women typically have less active political involvement than in any other region, holding an average of 3 per cent of seats in national parliaments.[9] Australia is helping its Pacific neighbours to address this through a $6.2 million commitment, in partnership with the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), to the Gender Equality in Political Governance Programme.

**Working with UNIFEM to promote gender equality in Pacific governance**

Australia supports the Gender Equality in Political Governance Programme, a five-year commitment that began in 2009, in partnership with UNIFEM. Working in 15 Pacific island countries with a focus on Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu, early achievements of the programme have included:

- Training programmes held in seven Pacific island countries to improve the skills, knowledge and confidence of 220 women and men (current or potential leaders, civic educators, media professionals, electoral observers and key stakeholders in electoral processes)
- Six regional forums and local consultation workshops held to strengthen the skills of gender equality advocates so that they are better equipped to demand constitutional and legal amendments by adopting temporary special measures and other forms of affirmative action to increase political representation of Pacific women.

[8] United Nations Development Fund for Women, *Progress of the World's Women 2008/2009* (New York, 2008).

[9] United Nations 2005 b (indicator 12).

**Putting it into practice**

45. The low level of representation of women in leadership positions in all aspects of life in Papua New Guinea is a significant issue. Australia is actively providing support for women to take up leadership positions in government, business and education and within their communities, through initiatives in Papua New Guinea, such as:

(a) Training around 330 district women's facilitators on how to visit, train and support school boards of management and their local communities, covering most of the 3,000 primary schools in the country;

(b) Providing assistance to the law and justice sector, which has seen a significant increase in the number of new women village court magistrates recruited and trained across the country, up from 10 in 2004 to 384 by the end of 2009.

**Increasing women's economic empowerment**

46. Improving women's participation in the economy is an important part of achieving gender equality. Based on estimates by the United Nations, men are more likely to be employed, with 73 per cent of working-age men in employment, compared to only 50 per cent of women.

**Putting it into practice**

47. In the Pacific, Australia is partnering with the International Finance Corporation and the World Bank to identify and address the barriers to women's economic participation through the Pacific Women in Private Sector Development initiative. This initiative includes action to reform the investment climate and improve the business environment by seeing it through a gender lens. Assessments have been conducted in Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Timor-Leste and Tonga.

**Millennium Development Goal 4: Reduce child mortality**

48. Australia is committed to reducing the number of children who die before they reach 5 years of age. According to the World Health Organization, more than 10,000 newborns die from preventable complications during pregnancy, childbirth or the first week of life. The United Nations Children's Fund has estimated that across the world in 2006, 9.7 million children died before their fifth birthday.

49. In many places, a preference for sons can mean that girls do not have the same access to food and health care as their brothers, and so girls are at greater risk of dying before their fifth birthday.

**Putting it into practice**

50. In Nepal, Australia is supporting the United Nations Children's Fund in reducing child mortality and malnutrition through Nepal's national vitamin A expansion programme. Australia has been supporting this programme since 1999. During 2008/09, this programme provided high-dose vitamin A to 3.7 million boys and girls aged between 6 months and 5 years of age, and helped to prevent more than 15,000 child deaths. Distribution coverage in Nepal now is above 90 per cent

(91.7 per cent for girls and 92.4 per cent for boys) and vitamin-A deficiency is no longer a public health problem.

51. In 2009, Australia signed the World Food Programme's first ever multi-year funding agreement, committing itself to $180 million in funding over four years in the fight against global hunger. This includes supporting dedicated school feeding programmes in Asia, Africa and Latin America to reduce the number of children, particularly girls, who suffer from hunger, while also improving school attendance and educational results.

**Millennium Development Goal 5: Improve maternal health**

52. Australia is committed to improving maternal health, including by strengthening health systems. It is working to improve maternal health through increasing women's access to reproductive health services, increasing the number of births attended by skilled health personnel and improving women's access to health-care services during their pregnancies.

53. The World Health Organization estimates that more than half a million women every year die during pregnancy or childbirth, and more than 90 per cent of these largely preventable deaths occur in developing countries. Australia is particularly concerned about the high maternal mortality ratio in Papua New Guinea (733 per 100,000 reported in the country's 2006 demographic health survey), which is compounded by the ageing health workforce. It is working with a Papua New Guinea-led taskforce established for the purpose of taking urgent action on this issue.

54. Having births assisted by skilled attendants is the most effective way of preventing maternal deaths, and it goes hand-in-hand with ensuring that women have access to good pregnancy and postnatal care, and are able to time and space their pregnancies using family planning.

**Putting it into practice**

55. In Ethiopia, 94 per cent of all births take place without a medically trained person in attendance, based on the national demographic and health survey.

56. The Addis Ababa Fistula Hospital, founded in 1974 by Australian obstetrician-gynaecologist, Catherine Hamlin, provides expectant mothers with access to trained midwives and health services. To extend such services, its midwifery college is providing training for young Ethiopian women. This will improve maternal health and contribute to reducing the number of women and babies who die during childbirth. The hospital is also establishing rural maternal health clinics to provide antenatal and maternal health services, and skilled medical help to women during labour. Australia is providing funding of $2.3 million over two years which will help see 25 rural maternal health clinics built and the college expanded to take student enrolments from 12 to 60 students each year.

57. Australia supports the work of the United Nations Population Fund to help improve reproductive health and safe motherhood, reduce HIV, eliminate gender-based violence and promote gender equality in the developing world. It also supports the Fund in integrating sexual and reproductive health programmes into emergency responses so that when disaster strikes, there is still access to family planning services, assisted delivery and emergency obstetric care.

**Millennium Development Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases**

58. Australia is working to reduce the spread of HIV/AIDS, malaria and other major diseases by increasing young people's knowledge of HIV/AIDS and improving access to appropriate drugs and other means to prevent and treat this disease and others, such as malaria and tuberculosis.

59. Strategies to prevent HIV infection must address the vulnerabilities of both women and men.

60. Some ideas about masculinity, particularly those related to power and violence against women, have a significant impact on women's rights and increase HIV vulnerability for women and girls. Sustainable programmes to change men's behaviour are therefore vital in reducing the spread of HIV. Some perceptions of gender roles and stereotypes also affect men and boys, and have negative impacts on their health. These too need to be addressed.

61. Care and support strategies must also recognize that women often carry the greater burden of care where they or a family member are living with HIV.

62. Prevention strategies must also ensure that the most marginalized and vulnerable women have their rights respected and have access to services.

**Putting it into practice**

63. In Papua New Guinea, Australia is supporting the integration of gender issues, including measures to respond to violence against women, as part of its work with non-governmental organizations on HIV/AIDS.

64. In the Autonomous Region of Bougainville, an Australian-supported project is using men as facilitators to run village-based activities on gender-based violence. A project in Eastern Highlands Province has involved female volunteers to increase interaction with women in the villages, increase the distribution of female condoms and increase referrals of women to treatment for sexually transmitted infections.

65. In Solomon Islands, Australian support has helped to substantially reduce new cases of malaria, from 199 per 1,000 in 2003 to 82 per 1,000 in 2008.

66. In conjunction with the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, Australia supports advanced training for counsellors working with survivors of gender-based violence and the development of tools and training materials for advocacy on HIV/AIDS and gender.

**Millennium Development Goal 7: Ensure environmental sustainability**

67. Australia recognizes that ensuring environmental sustainability, including sustainable access to safe drinking water and sanitation, is essential to improving the lives of women and girls.

68. Globally, the world is on track to meet the target for access to safe drinking water but not on track to meet that of access to basic sanitation. Access to safe drinking water has a significant impact on the lives of women by reducing the time they spend collecting water, and by improving the health of whole communities.

69. Providing water and safe sanitation facilities for women and girls also has other benefits. Offering water supply and separate sanitation facilities to girls in

schools encourages their school attendance. Children also take home the good hygiene practices they learn in school, which extends benefits to the whole family.

**Putting it into practice**

70. Australia is committed to integrating a gender perspective in environmental management, disaster management and climate change adaptation programmes and to ensuring that women's needs and their knowledge of natural systems are part of environmental policies. This includes recognizing gender inequalities in access to decision-making roles, resources and technologies when developing mitigation and disaster risk reduction activities, and considering the invaluable roles women play in promoting household and community sustainability.

71. Australia's approach to environmental sustainability focuses on increasing water supply and sanitation infrastructure; improving national and local water, sanitation and hygiene policies; and improving water supply and sanitation service delivery. This approach is producing results in many countries. Australia is a principal donor to a five-year programme of the Government of Viet Nam, which has led to 150 medium- to large-scale piped water schemes being built or upgraded, and hygienic latrines being provided to 504 schools, 181 health clinics and markets, and 100,000 households.

72. Through programmes in Kiribati and the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Australia has supported the provision of separate toilets and clean water to improve school environments and encourage increased school attendance by girls. In Timor-Leste, Australia provides support for the rural water supply and sanitation programme to improve water and sanitation facilities in rural areas, including for women and girls.

73. The United Nations Development Programme and Australia are supporting work in the Pacific to improve the way in which disaster risk management and climate change policy and activities respond to the different needs of men and women.

**Millennium Development Goal 8: Develop a global partnership for development**

74. Working together in global partnerships is vital if the world is to eradicate poverty. Many small island developing States face a range of development challenges, including ecological fragility, proneness to natural disasters and vulnerability to climate change. In addition, their lesser capacity to respond to challenges exacerbates their vulnerabilities and risks, and reduces their resilience to global events, such as climate change and globalization.

75. Gender equality and the empowerment of women are essential to addressing these challenges. A global partnership for development needs to involve women and men as partners and decision makers in order to ensure that women and men both benefit from the work of this partnership.

**Putting it into practice**

76. Australia is committed to the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States and to addressing the special circumstances of these States. Australia is working towards sustainable energy development, climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction in the Pacific. It recognizes that

effective sustainable development in the Pacific must include women as planners, sources of knowledge, decision makers and implementers.

77. Australia is a strong supporter of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community's Development of Sustainable Agriculture in the Pacific Programme, which improves the capacity of both women and men to improve their food security and livelihoods and, as a result, improve their resilience to disaster risks and the impacts of climate change. It has increased technological training for women in how to grow drought-resistant and saltwater-resistant crops, improve irrigation to prevent drought, construct terrace hillsides to prevent landslides and plant home gardens to improve accessibility to nutritious foods. It has also increased women's participation in national and community-level decisions about rural development.

## F. Delivering better aid

78. Australia is committed to the effective use of its aid funding so that lasting development results are achieved. Advancing gender equality is a critical part of delivering effective aid and reducing poverty in the long term. Other elements involve working more in partnership, aligning activities with the development plans and systems of the partner country, ensuring policy coherence, and focusing on monitoring and evaluating the aid programme and communicating results.

### Power of partnerships

79. Partners bring different skills, knowledge, resources, networks and perspectives to the table. Australia is initiating cooperative relationships involving multi-year funding arrangements with many multilateral organizations, other donor countries, civil society organizations, the private sector and its partner countries in development, which allow for longer-term planning.

80. Australia is supporting and strengthening United Nations leadership of global efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals through partnership agreements with key United Nations agencies. These partnerships promote increased collaboration on policy and programme issues and provide guaranteed multi-year core funding worth more than $343 million (2008-2012). For example, Australia's support to UNIFEM will strengthen efforts to achieve gender equality and reduce violence towards women in the developing world.

### Ownership and accountability

81. Australia strives to build partner country capacity and ownership of development, helping to ensure long-term sustainability. It is also providing more predictable aid commitments. For example, in 2008, in association with the Australia Indonesia Partnership Country Strategy, Australia made a five-year commitment of up to $2.5 billion in aid funding. This stated funding commitment provided Australia and Indonesia with the assurance that they could plan and implement programmes for several years.

82. Another central element of Australia's new approach to aid in the Pacific is the Cairns Compact on Strengthening Development Coordination in the Pacific, agreed to by leaders of the Pacific Islands Forum in August 2009. The Compact is designed to improve development outcomes in the region and achieve real progress measured

against the Millennium Development Goals by ensuring that Pacific island countries and their development partners work in a much more coordinated way to support country efforts. Important aspects of the Compact include: using national development plans to guide donor support; strengthening of the service delivery systems of Pacific island countries; collecting better development data; and conducting country peer reviews and partner reporting processes to monitor the effectiveness of the Compact. This initiative provides an important opportunity to advance gender equality and the empowerment of women.

83. Australia strengthened the quality and impact of its aid programme when it established the Office of Development Effectiveness in 2006. This Office monitors the quality of the aid provided and prepares annual reviews of development effectiveness. These reviews are a visible part of Australia's commitment to increase aid effectiveness and improve the transparency and accountability of its aid programme.

84. Australia is also placing greater emphasis on communicating the difference its support is making to development outcomes. By identifying what has worked and learning lessons from what has not worked, Australia is able to continuously improve the quality of its activities.

**Linking development, security and gender equality**

85. Development assistance and security are intrinsically linked. Conflict and insecurity can often reverse development gains and undermine progress towards achieving gender equality. More than one half of Australian bilateral aid programmes operate in countries that are fragile, vulnerable to conflict, conflict-affected or recovering from conflict.[10]

86. To ensure gender inequalities are not widened during conflict and post-conflict situations, Australia recognizes the significance of women's roles in preventing, managing and resolving conflict. We support full implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security.[11]

87. To build more sustainable peace, Australia is supporting a range of initiatives to promote women's roles in decision-making in conflict and post-conflict settings, at both the grass-roots and political levels. On International Women's Day in March 2010, Australia announced a contribution of nearly $4 million to support women's roles in peacebuilding and to respond to violence against women in conflict situations. This builds on its existing work in the Pacific, which provides training for key policymakers and civil society organizations in Bougainville, Fiji, Solomon Islands and Tonga and promotes the role of women in conflict mediation and peacebuilding efforts in the Philippines, in partnership with the Mindanao Commission on Women.

88. Where development and security challenges intersect, the maintenance of coherent policy approaches is particularly important. Australia's whole-of-government approach to addressing development and security concerns combines the

[10] Over 57 per cent of AusAID major bilateral programmes operate in countries that are fragile, vulnerable to conflict, conflict-affected or recovering from conflict.

[11] Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) was adopted unanimously on 31 October 2000 and was the first resolution passed by the Security Council that specifically addressed the impact of war on women, and women's contributions to conflict resolution and sustainable peace.

expertise of its development, police, defence and diplomatic resources to stabilize and support recovery in partner countries experiencing conflict and insecurity.

89. The engagement of a range of governmental departments not only promotes policy coherence across government, but facilitates the involvement of a broader range of expertise in delivering the aid programme, as demonstrated through Australia's ongoing commitment to countries such as Afghanistan and Timor-Leste, as well as through the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands.

**Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands**

In Solomon Islands, Australia's development assistance aims to achieve a more prosperous and secure future for the country by addressing long-term development and security challenges. This assistance is delivered through a bilateral aid programme and through the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI). In June 2009, the Solomon Islands Government and RAMSI signed a framework (2009-2013) which outlines the approach and focus of the partnership.

The mandate of RAMSI focuses on three core programmes: economic governance and growth, machinery of government, and law and justice. The machinery of government programme aims to support a governmental administration that is strategic, professional, transparent and accountable in the delivery of services.

*Women in Government Strategy*

As part of the machinery of government programme, the Women in Government Strategy is the first-ever coordinated approach towards advancing women in the Solomon Islands parliament. This strategy aims to strengthen women's participation in administration and representation in government, including through increasing the percentage of women at various levels within the public service and reducing barriers to their election.

The support provided under the Women in Government Strategy includes assisting the Ministry of Women to create a taskforce for: advancing women in parliament; providing mentoring and learning programmes for women in the governmental, community, church and business sectors; training more than 50 potential female members of boards and commissions; and supporting better coordination of donor funding for the development of a new Government policy on gender equality and women's development.

**Gender integration and disability**

90. The World Bank estimates that people with disability account for up to 20 per cent of the poor in developing countries.[12] Women with disability are often doubly disadvantaged, through their status as women and as persons with disability, and hence represent one of the most marginalized groups in society.

91. The need to take into account the intersection of gender and disability is a guiding principle of Australia's strategy, entitled "Development for all: towards a disability-inclusive Australian aid programme 2009-2014". Women and children with disability are particularly vulnerable to violence, exploitation and abuse (both within and outside conflict and humanitarian settings) and they face additional barriers to accessing basic services, achieving economic empowerment, pursuing educational opportunities, and being involved in decision-making and leadership roles.

92. The above-mentioned strategy, developed in close consultation with people with disability, focuses on improving the quality of life and ensuring the inclusion of people with disability in all aspects of the aid programme, including in the planning, implementation and review processes.

93. Within the Australian aid programme, gender and disability assessments are conducted as part of programme design and implementation. For example, a gender assessment was conducted during the design phase of the Viet Nam-Australia Vision Support Programme, revealing that women and girls, including women and girls with disability, have a significant prevalence of avoidable blindness. This resulted in the inclusion of a high-level objective to reduce gender inequality in access to, and health benefits from, comprehensive eye care in Viet Nam; the related programme began in March 2010.

## G. Meeting the challenge ahead

94. There is a great deal still to be achieved if the Millennium Development Goals are to be met. 2010 is a landmark year, during which the international community will sharpen its focus on the Goals in order to galvanize efforts as 2015 approaches. Australia recognizes that empowering women and girls will speed up progress towards achievement of the Millennium Development Goals; without gender equality, the Goals will not be achieved.

95. Australia is playing its part but is mindful of the challenges ahead. Australia will continue its work towards closing the gender gap and ensure that measures promoting equality between women and men are included throughout its aid programme, in concert with its development partners. Between now and 2015 much more needs to be done, but together we will make a difference.

---

[12] See A. Elwan, "Poverty and disability: a survey of the literature", Social Protection Discussion Paper, No. 9932 (Washington, D.C., World Bank, 1999).

United Nations E/2010/64

# Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
6 May 2010

Original: English

**Substantive session of 2010**
New York, 28 June-23 July 2010
Item 6 (a) of the provisional agenda*
**Implementation of and follow-up to major United Nations conferences and summits: follow-up to the International Conference on Financing for Development**

## Recovering from the crisis: a Global Jobs Pact

### Report of the Secretary-General

*Summary*

The present report, which was prepared by the International Labour Organization in response to Economic and Social Council resolution 2009/5, reviews national and international support to the implementation of the Global Jobs Pact. It underlines how key elements of the policies that countries adopted in response to the economic and financial crisis reflected the approach of the Pact and it highlights the efforts of the multilateral system to reorient its technical and financial assistance to address the employment and social protection needs of the most vulnerable countries and populations. The report reviews main lessons from the policy experience with national responses to the crisis and it calls for stronger employment and social protection policies and greater international policy coordination to accelerate and sustain recovery, with special attention to middle and lower income countries with limited fiscal space.

* E/2010/100

10-35045 (E) 280510

Please recycle

# I. Introduction

1. The present report is prepared in response to Economic and Social Council resolution 2009/5. In that resolution, the Council invited a range of actors to follow up and promote the content of the resolution adopted by the International Labour Conference entitled "Recovering from the crisis: towards a Global Jobs Pact".[1] It also requested the Secretary-General to report on progress in implementing Council resolution 2009/5 to the Council at its substantive session of 2010.

2. The Global Jobs Pact, as underlined in Economic and Social Council resolution 2009/5, is the only internationally agreed policy framework to address the social and employment impact of the financial and economic crisis. Its aim is to reduce the time lag between the start of economic recovery and the recovery of decent work opportunities. The Pact promotes a productive recovery centred on investments, employment and social protection, rights at work and social dialogue. It notes that recovery packages should be adapted to the special needs and circumstances of each country and that they should take into account the impact of the economic crisis on women and men, integrating gender equality concerns in all response measures. It recognizes the special needs of developing countries, especially the least developed, and it calls for a fair, sustainable and greener globalization. As outlined in the present report, many of the employment and social protection measures that countries have adopted in response to the crisis reflect the approach of the Pact; and many countries have moved to devise national jobs pacts in line with their needs and circumstances. To support these policies, the multilateral system has made new efforts to coordinate national actions and reorient and reorganize technical and financial assistance, especially catering to the needs of the most vulnerable countries and populations.

3. The report starts with a brief overview of the contribution of the United Nations system and other international organizations in promoting the Global Jobs Pact approach. It then reviews the employment and social consequences of the global financial and economic crisis, describing the impact on new and old vulnerabilities. Lessons from a range of policy measures falling under the framework of the Global Jobs Pact are reviewed in section IV.A concluding section V outlines key challenges in achieving the goals of the Pact and setting the world economy on a more stable path towards job-rich recovery, inclusive growth and poverty eradication.

# II. International support

4. The endorsement by the Economic and Social Council presaged a series of decisions supporting the Global Jobs Pact by different international bodies,

[1] "Recovering from the crisis: a Global Jobs Pact", resolution adopted at the ninety-eighth session of the International Labour Conference (Geneva, June 2009). In this report the term Global Jobs Pact refers to the International Labour Organization (ILO) resolution. The ILO Pact embraces a number of elements of the joint crisis initiative adopted by the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) in April 2009, in which the heading "Global jobs pact" refers to the employment elements of the ILO resolution. The ILO resolution adopting the Global Jobs Pact also covers the issues of basic social protection and greening the economy, which are the subject of separate initiatives in the CEB nine-point package.

meetings and conferences, including the summit of the Group of 20 (G-20) in Pittsburgh, the African Union, the Organization of American States, the European Union, the Arab Employment Forum: a Jobs Pact for Recovery and Growth (Beirut, October 2009), the United Nations Ministerial Conference on the Economic Crisis in Eastern Europe, Central Asia and Turkey (Almaty, December 2009), the Ministers of Labour of Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Mexico (Santiago, January 2010), the Tripartite High-level Meeting on Decent Work for Sustainable Development in the Pacific (Port Vila, February 2010); the Ministers for Labour and Social Affairs of the Portuguese-speaking countries community (Fortaleza, February 2010); the fourth Summit of the India-Brazil-South Africa (IBSA) Dialogue Forum; and the 2010 BRIC Summit (Brazil, Russian Federation, India and China).[2]

## A. United Nations system and the Global Jobs Pact

5. Many United Nations specialized agencies, funds and programmes are regularly engaged in a wide range of activities that contribute to achieving the goals of the Global Jobs Pact — from social development and humanitarian programmes to the promotion of small and medium-sized enterprises, extending social security, support for rural development, youth and women entrepreneurship, microfinance, investment in infrastructure and public works, industrial restructuring, sustainable use of natural resources and environmental protection. In the wake of the global economic downturn, such dimensions of the responsibilities of the United Nations relate more closely to employment and the labour market and the efforts to help developing countries to overcome the jobs crisis, strengthen their resilience and attain the Millennium Development Goals. Inter-agency cooperation to promote a system-wide response to the global economic crisis, encompassing the Global Jobs Pact, the social protection floor and several related policy areas was encouraged by a joint crisis initiative of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB).

6. Overall, employment and the labour market have not so far had a high profile in the follow-up to the Millennium Development Goals and largely consist of small-scale projects. In 2008, for instance, the global employment portfolio of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) consisted of approximately 470 projects with a total budgeted value of $162 million, out of a total flow of aid resources of $5 billion per year, of which nearly three quarters was in earmarked donor contributions.[3] The portfolio of the International Labour Organization (ILO) is of similar size and, while increasingly integrated into national decent work programmes, still has the characteristic of many relatively small projects. ILO and UNDP have decided to increase their collaboration with the aim of improving the effectiveness of support to national priorities in the field of employment and social protection (see para. 14 below).

[2] See "Giving effect to the Global Jobs Pact: consolidation of international declarations (July 2009-February 2010)", Rev.1 (Geneva, International Labour Organization, March 2010), available from http://www.ilo.org/public/libdoc/jobcrisis/download/giving_effects.pdf.

[3] See "Employment programming in response to the global financial and economic crisis", report to the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme and of the United Nations Population Fund, first regular session of 2010 (DP/2010/12).

## 1. Joint crisis initiatives of the United Nations system

7. In April 2009, pursuant to a proposal of the High-level Committee on Programmes, CEB endorsed a comprehensive strategy for United Nations system-wide action to confront the economic and financial crisis. The strategy draws on nine United Nations system joint crisis initiatives, each one coordinated by a lead organization working together with a cluster of cooperating organizations. The joint crisis initiatives framework covers several areas relevant to the Global Jobs Pact, including a social protection floor, food security, trade, technology and innovation, and a greener economy generating green jobs (see CEB/2009/1).

8. The main objective, under each of the nine initiatives, is to build on ongoing work of the United Nations system to provide a pool of expertise, resources, capacity-building and knowledge networks, which countries could rely upon in their policy and programme development related to the crisis. Overall, the joint crisis initiatives allow for a common outlook on policy areas critical to the crisis response. They permit the United Nations system to respond promptly and flexibly to the new needs of Member States, maintaining a global macroeconomic perspective while paying attention to the social and environmental dimensions of recovery (see CEB/2010/14).

9. In addition to providing direct support to its constituents to implement the Global Jobs Pact resolution, ILO has promoted greater inter-agency dialogue and technical exchange through its lead role of the CEB global jobs pact initiative.[4] The initiative has helped to identify specific areas of work where the input of different organizations to the implementation of the Pact would be especially relevant, including development of small and medium-sized enterprises and microfinance, value chains, public works and employment guarantee schemes, green jobs, rural employment and community development. Two critical issues emerged: the need to have timely and detailed knowledge of the impact of economic shocks on vulnerable employment and the informal economy, and the importance of solid analysis of the employment outcomes of different policy packages. Collaboration has started between ILO and the World Bank to review measures of global and regional aggregate employment trends, to analyse the distributional impacts of the crisis on employment, and to carry out an inventory of crisis response and recovery policy interventions.

10. The social protection floor initiative met with considerable enthusiasm and support from United Nations system partners internationally, and from Government and United Nations counterparts at the national level — a concrete sign of the growing consciousness of the role of social protection and the benefits it engenders.[5] Led by ILO and the World Health Organization (WHO), with the strong

[4] The initiative includes the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the International Fund for Agricultural Development, ILO, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat, UNDP, the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the regional commissions, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

[5] Paragraph 12 (1) of the Global Jobs Pact reads: "Countries should give consideration, as appropriate, to the following: ... building adequate social protection for all, drawing on a basic social protection floor including: access to health care, income security for the elderly and persons with disabilities, child benefits and income security combined with public employment guarantee schemes for the unemployed and working poor."

involvement of the United Nations Children's Fund, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and other organizations, the initiative has promoted a dynamic and constructive inter-agency collaboration by establishing a global social protection floor advisory network between collaborating United Nations organizations and development partners. A number of country activities where United Nations organizations closely collaborate are already under way (in Burkina Faso, Cambodia, the Maldives and Mozambique). Another four countries have shown interest and the inter-agency coalition has reported first contacts from a number of other countries. There is also discussion of using a social protection floor approach in the reconstruction of Haiti, which is a new and challenging possibility. A strong collaboration with the Special Unit for South-South Cooperation in UNDP has firmly integrated the social protection floor as a topic for South-South learning activities, and courses at the ILO International Training Centre in English, French and Spanish further contribute to building implementation capacities for policies related to social protection floors at the country level. On the whole, the concept has been taken up much faster than anticipated and important elements of it have been endorsed by the governing bodies of several United Nations organizations. The challenge is to bring the concept into the mainstream of regular activities of the organizations and at the same time promote a sustainable cooperative structure to maintain momentum.

11. Several other components of the nine-point CEB package of initiatives also fall within the issues covered by the ILO resolution. These include the green economy initiative, led by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP),[6] which has yielded a wide range of research, advocacy and training products that are of particular value considering that some 15 per cent of country stimulus packages have been identified as green-related investments, with job creation, alternative livelihoods and poverty reduction being among the key motivators for making those investments, in addition to the environmental gains. The food security initiative, led by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, built on the work of the Secretary-General's High-level Task Force on the Global Food Security Crisis, providing an opportunity to reflect the crisis-related aspects in the revised comprehensive framework for action on the issue and establish a broad partnership with relevant actors.[7] Organizations participating in the trade initiative,[8] led by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and the World Trade Organization, have been active in monitoring trade and investment developments to counter protectionism, in encouraging existing aid for trade pledges and in pressing for the conclusion of the Doha Round of trade negotiations.

12. Following the call for a coordinated approach at the country level made at the Conference on the World Financial and Economic Crisis and Its Impact on Development (see General Assembly resolution 63/303, annex), the United Nations

[6] Paragraph 21 (3) of the Global Jobs Pact encourages cooperation in "shifting to a low-carbon, environment-friendly economy that helps accelerate the jobs recovery, reduce social gaps and support development goals and realize decent work in the process".

[7] Paragraph 22 (5) of the Global Jobs Pact recognizes "the value of agriculture in developing economies and the need for rural infrastructure, industry and employment".

[8] Paragraph 21 (2) of the Global Jobs Pact encourages cooperation in "promoting efficient and well-regulated trade and markets that benefit all and avoiding protectionism by countries", while taking into account "varying development levels of countries" in "lifting barriers to domestic and foreign markets".

Development Group has developed modalities to support field-based, country-owned crisis response programmes targeting the most vulnerable countries and populations and drawing on the expertise, resources and networks made available under each of the nine initiatives. The initiative related to additional financing for the vulnerable, led by UNDP and the World Bank, has not, however, resulted in new financing to support the Global Jobs Pact (see CEB/2010/4).

13. Limited additional funding is a significant factor restraining the scope for action by United Nations country teams to support comprehensive and coordinated crisis response programmes in vulnerable countries. A further factor inhibiting integrated approaches to respond to the crisis could be a tendency to revert to project-based approaches, which are less suited to tackling the pervasiveness of the social repercussions of a generalized decline in levels of economic activity or a sequence of multiple economic shocks. A continuing challenge remains the need to seek greater coherence between the Bretton Woods institutions and the rest of the United Nations system at the country level, particularly with regard to macroeconomic and fiscal enablers of policy measures. A very specific obstacle to well-designed and targeted programmes and policies is the lack in many countries of comprehensive and timely statistics about the labour market and the social impacts of the crisis.

### 2. Other United Nations initiatives

14. At its 306th session, held in Geneva from 5 to 20 November 2009, the Governing Body of ILO renewed the call for an "employment oriented" response to the global economic crisis based on the policy measures set out in the Global Jobs Pact. The Governing Body requested the Director-General of ILO to deepen support for countries applying the Pact, seek additional resources to fund policy initiatives within the framework of the Pact, and increase the capacity of the International Labour Office to respond to requests from constituents, including through South-South cooperation. It encouraged the Office to further develop its cooperation with multilateral institutions. The effect given to the Global Jobs Pact was reviewed at the 307th session of the ILO Governing Body, held in Geneva from 11 to 26 March 2010.

15. At its first regular session of 2010, held in New York from 19 to 22 January, the UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board adopted decision 2010/11, entitled "UNDP response to the financial and economic crisis: promoting the Global Jobs Pact". The decision called upon UNDP to integrate the Global Jobs Pact into its operational activities under the UNDP strategic plan. It asked the Administrator to strengthen inter-agency collaboration at the country level so as to enhance thematic ties with the CEB social protection floor initiative. It also requested UNDP to include in the annual report of the Administrator a progress report outlining the initiatives it had undertaken to implement the decision.

16. As a follow-up to decision 2010/11, concrete steps are being taken to enhance collaboration between UNDP and ILO in key areas, including: (a) activities to promote employment creation, income generation and reintegration in post-conflict countries; (b) tackling climate change through the generation of green jobs in adaptation and mitigation; (c) building a stronger empirical base and knowledge about the employment impact of various policies and programmes; and (d) taking

forward joint work on promoting the social protection floor, including through country initiatives.

17. As requested by CEB and the Economic and Social Council, ILO is providing support to countries and multilateral agencies to determine how policies, strategies, programmes and activities are interlinked with employment and decent work outcomes. The 2010 guidelines issued by the United Nations Development Group on developing United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks promote the use of the CEB *Toolkit for Mainstreaming Employment and Decent Work*[9] by United Nations country teams to develop the current Development Assistance Frameworks and "Delivering as one" programmes. The *Toolkit* can help to promote better understanding of the policy options included in the Global Jobs Pact and to incorporate them into national outcomes. Using the *Toolkit*, ILO has assisted national Governments and United Nations organizations to mainstream decent work in Argentina, Indonesia, Pakistan, Serbia, the Syrian Arab Republic, the United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay and Viet Nam.

18. Support to the Global Jobs Pact has also come from the Commission for Social Development. At its forty-eighth session, held in New York from 4 to 13 February 2010, the Commission recommended a draft resolution entitled "Promoting social integration" for adoption by the Economic and Social Council, in which the Council would take note of the adoption of the Pact and the CEB joint crisis initiatives. Recognizing that the economic and financial crisis could have negative implications for social development, the draft resolution urges Governments, with the cooperation of relevant entities, to develop systems of social protection to extend coverage of social security and support labour-market participation.

19. The Global Jobs Pact was adopted as an entry point and basis for continued work by the inter-agency task team for the implementation of the United Nations system-wide "Plan of action on full employment and decent work for all", under the framework of the Second United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (2008-2017).[10] The task team also agreed that, by virtue of its focus on full employment and decent work, the Second Decade network of focal points could provide a convenient mechanism to trigger inter-agency action on the Global Jobs Pact, avoiding duplication of efforts and helping to build coherence within the system. Given its scope and time frame, the Second Decade could also provide a channel to distil and disseminate lessons from the experience of the United Nations system with employment and decent work measures to cope with crisis response and recovery, with a view at strengthening the capacity of the system to deal with those dimensions of its work.

---

[9] Geneva, International Labour Office, first edition 2007.

[10] The Second United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (2008-2017) provides a framework for reflection and medium-term action to boost efforts aimed at achieving the internationally agreed development goals related to poverty eradication, including the Millennium Development Goals. In the recognition that employment and labour market policies and institutions are critical means of enhancing the capabilities of the poor and helping them to realize their rights, the framework is focused on full employment and decent work. The task team is led by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat and ILO. FAO, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, UNEP, UNIDO, the Non-Governmental Organization Liaison Service of the Secretariat, the World Tourism Organization, the World Food Programme, IMF and the CEB secretariat are members of the task team.

20. As emphasized in the report of the Secretary-General on progress made towards implementing the Millennium Development Goals (A/64/665), access to decent and productive employment, as well as promotion of entrepreneurship, are fundamental ways of increasing the pace of progress on all the Goals. The report further encourages Member States to pay close attention to the recommendations contained in the ILO Global Jobs Pact.

## B. The Group of 20 Pittsburgh summit and Washington meeting of Ministers of Labour and Employment

21. At the 2009 summit in Pittsburgh, leaders of the G-20, concerned about finding a more balanced approach to the global economy, committed to establishing a framework for strong, sustainable and balanced growth to ensure "a durable recovery that creates the good jobs our people need". The statement by the G-20 leaders invited international institutions to consider the goals of the ILO Pact in their crisis and post-crisis analysis and policymaking activities.

22. As a follow-up to the Pittsburgh summit, a meeting of the G-20 Ministers for Labour and Employment took place, at the invitation of the United States Secretary of Labor, in Washington, D.C., on 20 and 21 April 2010. The ministers made an assessment of the labour market situation in the aftermath of the crisis, reviewing the impact of the massive measures undertaken to respond to it and discussing what additional measures might be needed to ensure a sustained job recovery. In their review, they acknowledged that the ILO Global Jobs Pact and decent work agenda were valuable resources to design further measures to address employment and social protection systems. The ministers developed a list of five key recommendations to submit to the G-20 leaders as a contribution to the G-20 Framework for Strong, Sustainable and Balanced Growth and to enhanced policy coherence (see box 1). The recommendations reflect the diversity of the economies and stages of development of the G-20 countries, providing ample room for adaptation to the particular needs of each country; yet they also provide a common framework within which Governments can act together to reach a higher equilibrium of progress and well-being for their citizens.

Box 1

**Summary of recommendations of G-20 Ministers of Labour and Employment to G-20 leaders (Washington, D.C., 20 and 21 April 2009)**

**Accelerate job creation to ensure a sustained recovery and future growth**

As some countries begin to experience economic recovery, we recommend that continued attention be paid to job creation and job preservation, including vigorous implementation of existing policies and consideration of additional employment measures.

throughout the year and into 2011, dampening consumption in many countries. The danger of reining in stimulus measures before the recovery has fully taken hold in the private sector remains a concern. The exposure of banks to non-performing property loans in some countries and concern over possible sovereign debt defaults further threaten confidence.

23. Developing and emerging countries as a group are expected to grow noticeably faster than advanced countries, at 6.3 per cent, also helped by strong stimulus measures in the larger countries. The financial systems of most developing countries were also more resilient than those of the main financial centres. The crisis was thus "imported" via the slowdown in export earnings, foreign investment and, in some countries, declines in workers' remittances. There are large differences between the prospects for different countries however. Expansion of gross domestic product of 8.7 per cent is forecast for Asian economies, led by China and India. China's growth rebound is an important motor for the region and minerals exporters as it pulls in imports of components and raw materials. In the other regions, Mexico experienced a sharp fall of 6.5 per cent in 2009, but is expected to recover to 4.2 per cent in 2010. Brazil likewise could grow at 5.5 per cent. The Russian Federation, helped by an increase in commodity prices, is also returning to growth after a deep recession in 2009. Other developing and emerging economies are forecast to grow in a range of 4 to 5.5 per cent.

## B. Weakness of the recovery in labour markets

24. The crisis has had a devastating impact on employment, and most negatively upon those people failing to benefit from earlier periods of economic growth. Still, the reduction in employment has been mitigated by the combined fiscal stimulus to the economy and to the attention that had been given to jobs and social protection in this response. ILO has estimated that unemployment could have been approximately a third higher without the effect of stimulus measures and the activation of automatic stabilizers, with an estimated 21 million jobs created or saved between 2009 and 2010 in the G-20 countries alone.[11]

25. Nevertheless employment could take several years to recover, raising serious risks and challenges for many countries. Long-term unemployment is increasing, and the rise in employment in the informal sector will be difficult to reverse. Unemployment, as estimated by the ILO *Global Employment Trends*,[12] affected a record 212 million people in 2009. Several advanced countries, including Ireland, Spain and the United States of America, suffered particularly large increases in unemployment rates, which is likely linked to the sharp impact of the financial crisis in these countries.[13]

---

[11] "Accelerating a job-rich recovery in G-20 countries: building on experience", ILO report, with substantive contributions from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), to the meeting of G-20 Ministers for Labour and Employment, Washington, D.C., 20 and 21 April 2010.

[12] Geneva, International Labour Office, January 2010.

[13] See Department of Economic and Social Affairs, "World economic vulnerability monitor", No. 4, April 2010, available from http://www.un.org/esa/policy/publications/wespwevm/monitor4.pdf.

26. Measurements of unemployment are less useful when assessing the labour market impacts of the crisis in developing countries, because of the low levels of formal wage employment. In these countries, analysing the share of workers in vulnerable employment[14] and the working poor (those living on less than $1.25 or $2 per day) is more telling. The ILO *Global Employment Trends* estimates that vulnerable employment may have increased by as much as 110 million individuals, making 1.5 billion, or 50.6 per cent, of the world's population trapped in vulnerable employment.

27. The potential for a large increase in the numbers of working poor as a result of the effects of the crisis is illustrated by a simulation of a cumulative decline in the incomes of those living just above the $1.25 a day poverty line. If incomes among those workers just above the poverty line declined by 10 per cent in 2008 and 20 per cent in 2009, this would push 215 million working women and men below the extreme poverty line. A less sharp decline in the incomes of those workers living marginally above the poverty line, 5 per cent in 2008 and 10 per cent in 2009, would cause some 110 million to fall into extreme poverty. These simulations serve to illustrate the fragility of progress in poverty reduction to the effects of economic downturn.[15]

28. Young workers remain among the most vulnerable groups in labour markets during times of economic downturn. Their unemployment rates are considerably greater than those experienced by prime-age workers even outside of crisis periods, often nearly 3 to 4 times as high, and recently have been rising at faster rates. Thus far the crisis has contributed to creating the largest year on year increase in youth unemployment for more than 10 years, increasing by 10.2 million worldwide from 2008 to 2009.[15] With much of the rise in unemployment coming from decreases in hiring, young workers are disproportionately affected.[16] The long-term effects of unemployment upon youth workers are also of serious concern, particularly for the "scarring" effects which may arise. Generating productive employment opportunities for youth in Africa is critical, where 60 per cent of the population as at 2008 was under 25 years old. Young women and men make up 40 per cent of the labour market, suffer from the highest rates of unemployment and are the most likely to be engaged in vulnerable forms of employment.

29. The impact of the crisis on employment developments have severely affected both men and women, setting back progress towards achieving decent work and sufficient earnings to reduce poverty. Job losses in manufacturing and construction have had greater effects on men. In certain regions and sectors women have been at greater risk, such as in Asian countries where they compose the majority of the workforce in export manufacturing industries. This sector is also primarily the domain of women in many Latin American countries. Reduced demand for migrant labour from Asia has a disproportionate effect on women, as they compose roughly two thirds of the region's migrants. In Africa, vulnerable employment in agriculture

[14] Vulnerable employment is defined as the sum of own-account workers and contributing family workers.

[15] International Labour Organization, *Global Employment Trends* (Geneva, International Labour Office, January 2010).

[16] Sandrine Cazes, Sher Verick and Caroline Heuer, "Labour market policies in times of crisis", Employment Working Paper No. 35 (Geneva, International Labour Office, 2009).

and the informal economy is dominated by women, making them, along with young people, among the worst affected on the continent by the crisis.

## C. Threat of the jobs crisis to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals

30. The full impact of the crisis upon the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals remains to be seen, yet clearly the adverse economic conditions have slowed progress and left major gaps, particularly for the populations of the world's smaller and more vulnerable countries. The weakening of labour market conditions directly affects the earning power of the poor and feeds through into other dimensions of poverty, including access to health care and education.

31. Loss of productive income and shrinking social spending will deliver a severe blow to poverty reduction efforts. The Asia and Pacific region hosts the greatest number of people living in extreme poverty. Analysis from the Asian Development Bank and the United Nations attribute an additional 21 million individuals having incomes of less than the $1.25 a day in 2009 to 2010. Using the $2 per day measurement, the Economic Commission for Africa and the African Union have estimated that an additional 27 million Africans entered into poverty in 2009 on account of the crisis, with the sharp reductions in growth costing the continent's 390 million extreme poor roughly 20 per cent of their annual income.[17] The "feminization" of African poverty implies a greater risk for women and children as the crisis develops. Poverty in Eastern Europe and Central Asia is also expected to increase. The World Bank has forecast that in 2010, compared with what was expected before the crisis, the region will see over 11 million more people in poverty, as well as over 23 million more people just above the poverty line.[18]

32. Regional variations are important determinants underlying the efforts to achieve Millennium Development Goal 1. The goal is expected to be reached at a global level, mainly though the large drops in poverty experienced in China and other East Asian nations. Sub-Saharan African poverty levels have declined much less dramatically. Although food prices have descended from their historic levels in 2008, the situation remains volatile. Recent signs of increasing food prices could have a detrimental impact upon efforts to accelerate progress in poverty reduction. Trends towards reducing the number of the world's undernourished population were already threatened by the 2008 food crisis; analysis suggests the number of undernourished people increased by 63 million people compared with 2007 figures. The economic crisis may be responsible for a further 41 million undernourished in 2009 than would have been the case without the crisis.[19]

---

[17] *Economic Report on Africa 2010: promoting high-level sustainable growth to reduce unemployment in Africa* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.10.II.K.1).

[18] Erwin R. Tiongson and others, *The Crisis Hits Home: Stress-testing Households in Europe and Central Asia* (Washington, D.C., World Bank, 2010).

[19] *Global Monitoring Report 2010: The MDGs after the Crisis* (Washington, D.C., World Bank/IMF, 2010).

# IV. National policy responses

33. Governments in many countries responded to the financial and economic crisis with unprecedented expansionary monetary and fiscal policies. In contrast to the response to the 1998 Asian financial crisis, many countries increased or maintained levels of social spending, limiting falls in output, containing the extent of financial contagion and facilitating a more rapid recovery. Employment and social protection measures such as those suggested in the Global Jobs Pact were the main components of the fiscal stimulus packages and recovery plans of most countries.[20]

## A. Lessons from experience with employment and social protection measures to respond to the economic crisis

34. As noted above, fiscal measures contributed significantly to mitigating the effects of the crisis on employment. A survey of country employment and social protection measures carried out by ILO in July 2009 gave some indication of what kinds of measures were introduced in about 50 industrialized and developing countries.[21] The study found that the six most frequently taken measures included additional spending on infrastructure; subsidies and tax reductions for small enterprises; credit for small enterprises; training programmes and facilities; consultations with employers' and workers' organizations; and social protection through cash transfers. These measures were among the policy options outlined in the Global Jobs Pact.

35. Further analysis was carried out by ILO, with substantive contributions from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, in early 2010.[22] The new study pointed to a shift in emphasis in the policies adopted by G-20 countries — from the first wave of initiatives aimed at staving off a precipitous decline in employment and mitigating the impact on the most vulnerable, to measures seeking to promote a job-rich recovery, assist the long-term unemployed and prepare the workforce for structural changes such as those resulting from adaptation to lower carbon emissions.

36. The study noted that policymakers had shown some preference for measures that already had a track record in several countries and for which some institutional capacity was already in place, such as expanding or adapting existing programmes and projects. Nonetheless, Governments have been active in combining policy innovation with tried and tested measures, tailoring the recovery packages to the needs of their labour markets, the structure of their economies and the possibilities afforded by their level of development. Countries with automatic stabilizers already in place were better able to buffer the labour market effects of recession. Others had

[20] The adoption of the ILO Global Jobs Pact resolution in June 2009 was preceded by a series of international and regional consultations among a wide range of actors. Those consultations, together with the launch of the joint crisis initiatives by CEB in April 2009, provided critical inputs to the crafting of the Pact.

[21] See "Protecting people, promoting jobs: a survey of country employment and social protection policy responses to the global economic crisis", ILO report to the G-20 leaders summit, Pittsburgh, September 2009.

[22] Accelerating a job-rich recovery ... (ILO, April 2010).

to resort to large-scale discretionary measures. Many had to face difficult choices in readjusting meagre social budgets across new and old vulnerabilities.

37. There has been a great deal of national and regional specificity, but also common features and common lessons. The study made an attempt to draw conclusions about the impact of different measures in G-20 countries. The preliminary set of lessons deriving from those conclusions is a valuable source to assist countries strengthen their employment and social policies in line with the Global Jobs Pact and adapt measures to fit their national circumstances (see box 2).

38. A comprehensive look at the range of employment and social protection policy measures across all countries shows that the number of initiatives taken in middle and lower income countries was usually lower than in the most developed nations. There were similarities across countries at different levels of development (for example, a common emphasis on infrastructure investment, support to small and medium-sized enterprises and training and social expenditure) as well as differences. Active labour market policy measures similar to those adopted in the more developed countries were often used — mainly training, followed by job search assistance and entrepreneurship incentives. A number of middle-income and lower-middle-income countries that were experiencing job losses in their formal economy, often in export-oriented sectors, introduced basic forms of work-sharing or working time adjustments, at national or company levels. In general, however, countries at lower levels of development favoured interventions to address social vulnerabilities through public works programmes and cash transfers, either through the scaling up of existing schemes or the introduction of pilot programmes in targeted areas. At times, increases in minimum wages were used as an accompanying measure. Measures to support agriculture were also relatively more common.

Box 2
**Emerging lessons from the policy experience with crisis response in G-20 countries**

*Stimulating labour demand*

- Fiscal stimulus is working, but the timing, size and composition of spending determine effectiveness in saving and creating jobs
- Public spending on infrastructure generates jobs, especially when policy design and implementation systems are focused on employment creation
- Retaining employees through reduced working hours or other schemes can save jobs and retain skills; temporary schemes developed through social dialogue can maximize cost-effectiveness
- A broad range of measures to support small and medium-sized enterprises helps to save and create jobs
- Hiring subsidies can bring forward hires that employers, uncertain about recovery, may delay and are particularly useful for increasing opportunities for disadvantaged workers such as the long-term unemployed in the early phases of recovery

*Extending social protection*

- Social protection has helped many women and men and their families cope with the recession and halt the economic downturn, especially where systems were already in place and could be quickly extended. A basic social protection floor could bring these benefits to hundreds of millions more

- Targeting public employment programmes to depressed areas can be effective where schemes are well designed and targeted. Countries with experience of such employment guarantee schemes were best placed to enlarge them in the crisis

*Promoting employment and skills*

- Reinforced public employment services and strengthened cooperation with private employment agencies can play a major role in promoting a quick reintegration of job seekers into employment as the economy recovers and are vital to help disadvantaged workers keep a foothold in the world of work

- Enterprises and Governments have used the downturn as an up-skilling opportunity, providing employees, job seekers and new entrants with additional training

- Maintaining or, when appropriate, raising wages for the lowest paid, can contribute to countercyclical policies and reduce the risk of increased poverty

*Source*: ILO, April 2010.

## B. Progress in promoting an integrated Global Jobs Pact policy package

39. Underlying the Global Jobs Pact approach is the notion that a combination of measures usually tends to produce better and more lasting results. Most policy measures have secondary effects that reinforce, or weaken, the effects of measures in related areas. In fact, one main outcome of the recent experience with crisis response has been the recognition that social protection brings a triple benefit. In addition to protecting people from being trapped in debilitating poverty, social protection empowers them to maintain their human capital and seize market opportunities, possibly even leading to the formation and upgrading of microenterprises. At the same, social protection contributes to aggregate demand, creating more space for those enterprises to prosper and generate jobs. Similarly, the expansion of productive and sustainable employment reduces the fiscal burden of social spending directly, as higher incomes afford families to pay for services and not to depend on social benefits, or indirectly through taxation and higher fiscal revenues. The search for virtuous circles and the optimal policy mix according to national circumstances is a main aspect of successful policy design and implementation.

40. In many countries, including Chile, Germany, Japan, Singapore and South Africa, consultations among Governments and employers' and workers' organizations have led to tripartite agreements, national action plans and other arrangements on measures to mitigate the consequences of the crisis and to accelerate recovery. The involvement of social partners has been a way to balance economic and social concerns and strive for convergent approaches.

41. Some countries have decided to adopt the Global Jobs Pact approach in an integral way and have approached ILO for technical support. To respond to their request, ILO has developed diagnostic tools to review and analyse national policy measures using a Pact framework, and it has carried out a series of technical missions to Bulgaria, El Salvador, Indonesia, Jordan and South Africa. Similar work is beginning in other countries. The development of a national pact usually entails a process of consultations with social partners and other stakeholders. In Indonesia, for instance, a high-level tripartite steering committee has been set up to provide oversight and direction. A dedicated website has been set up by ILO to provide information on developments in national, regional and international activities related to the Global Jobs Pact (see www.ilo.org/jobspact).

## C. Fiscal and policy constraints in developing countries

42. Resource and administrative constraints affect the capacity of many developing countries to engage in countercyclical interventions targeted on employment and social protection. This, combined with widespread gaps in social protection coverage and the deficiency of automatic stabilizers, is a critical weakness. This hinders efforts to avoid the cumulative deflationary effects of economic shocks and contributes to perpetuate a situation of vulnerability and social distress, particularly when multiple shocks come each on top of the other as was the case with the food, fuel and financial crises.

43. Focusing on the contribution of the Global Jobs Pact to recovery and growth, a recent discussion at the ILO Governing Body Working Party on the Social Dimension of Globalization drew attention to the significant number of developing countries that have not been able to participate in coordinated stimulus measures and that international support mechanisms are not providing the scale of countercyclical finance they need, on terms they can afford.[23] Concern was expressed by many delegates that this was holding back more vigorous action along the lines envisaged in the Global Jobs Pact.

44. The capacity to implement policies such as those advocated in the Global Jobs Pact in a timely and comprehensive manner is specially lacking in smaller middle and lower-income countries, where fiscal space is limited as a result of declining tax revenues, faltering remittances and export earnings and falls in aggregate demand. The tightening budget situation is not just preventing the adoption of discretionary fiscal measures, in some countries it may be leading to cuts in spending for education, health, social transfers and existing safety nets, thereby jeopardizing the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

[23] ILO, report of the Working Party on the Social Dimension of Globalization (GB.307/15(rev), March 2010).

45. Some efforts have been made in those countries to cater to the new and the old poor through the reshuffling of social expenditures, the encouragement of community-driven programmes and better targeting and monitoring of social programmes, in some cases shifting away from food and fuel subsidies. Preparedness and timeliness helped to make a difference. Countries with established systems of social protection, or where safety net schemes were in place and could be scaled up rapidly, have been able to better cushion the effects on the vulnerable groups. In some cases, emergency assistance from the World Bank and IMF eased the pressure on social programmes. In others, international assistance was accompanied by deflationary elements that depressed demand and affected the incomes of the poor. Some redirection of international aid helped to mitigate the effects of the crisis on the welfare of the poor, but little resources were left to sustain public and private productive investments and support domestic enterprises and employment.

46. Important initiatives have been taken to increase the reserves of the international financial institutions and some multilateral development banks. Nevertheless, the demands for international financial resources by developing countries significantly exceed the resources available. Further increases appear to be highly desirable especially to sustain public expenditure on infrastructure and human capital, provide support for the private sector and sustainable enterprises to access new markets, introduce job creation and retention policies, as well as holding up incomes and aggregate demand, including through the expansion of a basic social protection floor. As shown by the review of crisis responses above, those countries — developing or developed — that have been able to implement aspects of such policies have more successfully weathered the economic crisis and embarked more rapidly on recovery.

## V. Policy challenges: an employment agenda for inclusive growth and development

47. Despite a major policy effort in many countries to counteract the downturn and prompt fast and strong recovery, job creation is lagging and new and old social vulnerabilities have increased. With the prospects for sustained global economic growth uneven and fragile, policymakers face the challenge of sustaining credible and effective stimulus measures while ensuring sound public finances and packaging measures to maximize job generation and social resilience. The impact of national efforts will be maximized by enhanced international coordination, including through the facilitation of financial support to countries facing the greatest policy constraints. Policies to foster the creation of decent work opportunities and extend basic social protection are at the heart of strategies to secure recovery and move on to a balanced path of sustainable development essential to the eradication of poverty.

48. The main challenges are to construct a policy mix appropriate to each country and mobilize national and international support. One central element is to leverage public policy in order to stimulate new private investments in productive activities, innovation and the generation of decent jobs. Another is to strengthen and extend systems to protect people from successions of economic shocks and the related social risks. The two objectives are interrelated: improved productivity can feed

income growth, which in turn stimulates investment in further increases in productivity. A strong focus on sustainable job creation together with basic social protection can create a conducive policy environment for stable and inclusive growth and development and thus a solid foundation for poverty eradication.

49. As is underlined in Economic and Social Council resolution 2009/5, the Global Jobs Pact builds on linkages among social progress, economic development and the response to the crisis. The implementation of measures recommended by the Pact has helped to mitigate the impact of the crisis especially in those countries able to launch vigorous stimulus packages. The experience so far thus suggests that employment and social policies that are implemented in an integrated way nationally and coordinated internationally can be used to accelerate job creation and sustain economic recovery. Over the long term, the Pact could be a valuable framework for generating coordinated policy efforts to move out of the crisis through an employment-oriented agenda leading to a fairer, greener and sustainable globalization.

50. Additional efforts to ensure that recovery is sustained and produces job-rich growth for the future are warranted especially given worrying forecasts of labour market weakness in many countries. Premature unwinding of fiscal spending in one country after another under the pressure of international financial speculation, would be self-defeating. It is important to avoid the withdrawal of public support before increased business investment and household consumption is on a firm upward path. Coordinated, well-crafted and sequenced exit strategies are thus critical.

51. Combining employment and social protection measures within integrated packages can help to ensure maximum impact on demand, investment and employment generation, thereby contributing to higher growth, increased fiscal revenues and stronger economic foundations to sustain fiscal deficits. Experience with crisis response is providing lessons on how policies can be made more effective, prompting new policy thinking and the adoption of a more flexible set of instruments and approaches. The crisis is also offering an opportunity for more complementarity between macroeconomic and employment and social protection policies. Centrality of employment is a way to ensure coherence across different macroeconomic interventions.

52. A stronger employment and decent work agenda is particularly relevant to developing countries, especially the smaller middle and lower income economies. There is a need to create resilience to external shocks through greater economic diversification and a more inclusive and employment-intensive growth path. The Global Jobs Pact approach suggests giving priority to investments in infrastructure and agriculture, promoting sustainable enterprises, especially small and medium-sized enterprises, fostering the uptake of technology and vocational and entrepreneurial skills, especially for young people, and addressing informality to achieve the transition to formal employment.

53. Such policies would assist the build-up of productive capacities and diversified economies. Equally important, they would complement the necessary interventions to build up a basic social protection floor on a national basis. There is a growing consensus within the development community that providing a set of programmes for minimum economic security, in the form of cash transfers and targeted employment schemes, is a vital component of strategies to reduce structural poverty.

One lesson of the crisis is that these are important mechanisms for sustaining families and preventing poverty, creating a path for workers into the market economy and underpinning consumption and aggregate demand.

54. The drive to lift people out of poverty has been the main focus of the development endeavours of the international community over the past decade, with the Millennium Development Goals providing the frame of reference and a set of guiding tools. In the wake of the crisis and its impact on social expenditures and official development assistance budgets, there is a strong emphasis on redoubling and accelerating the efforts to achieve the Goals within the time targets. The crisis has shown that policies to protect the welfare of the poor and the extreme poor must go hand in hand with efforts to strengthen the economies where the poor live and reduce their vulnerability to shocks emanating from the international economy. There is legitimate concern with the need to accelerate progress on the Millennium Development Goals in countries where there are likely to be major measurable gaps. The Global Jobs Pact approach is an important tool in such a renewed emphasis on shaping a pro-poor dynamic to recovery and growth.

55. The systemic nature of the crisis is also bringing to the fore long-standing unresolved issues with the pattern of globalization. The agenda for reform is complex and filled with multifaceted priorities. New steps are being taken to address issues of global macroeconomic coordination, regulation of financial markets, the relaunch of trade negotiations and climate change. Examining these issues through an employment lens could make an important contribution to more coherent policymaking. Such an approach could help to harness the potential international multiplier effects of, for example, coordinated measures to promote employment and social protection, financing of productive investments, expansion of trade and environmental sustainability.

56. The Economic and Social Council has and can continue to play a pivotal role in stimulating policy convergence to ensure a recovery in which all countries are able to join and that it is succeeded by a more stable and inclusive path of global development. In this endeavour the Global Jobs Pact has provided a valuable instrument through which countries and the United Nations system have been able to focus on the global priority of tackling unemployment and underemployment. One year since the adoption of resolution 2009/5, positive signs of a policy shift are emerging. Nonetheless, the scale of the disruption caused by the financial crisis requires renewed efforts to enhance further international policy coherence and cooperation.

United Nations E/2010/65

# Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
7 May 2010
English
Original: Spanish

**Substantive session of 2010**
New York, 28 June-23 July 2010
Item 2 (c) of the provisional agenda*
**High-level segment: annual ministerial review**

## Letter dated 5 May 2010 from the Permanent Representative of Brazil to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Economic and Social Council

Attached herewith is the national report of the Federative Republic of Brazil on progress towards the achievement of the internationally agreed goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, for the annual ministerial review to be held during the high-level segment of the 2010 substantive session of the Economic and Social Council (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would circulate the present letter and its annex as a document of the Council, under item 2 (c) of the provisional agenda.

(*Signed*) Maria Luiza Ribeiro **Viotti**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

* E/2010/100

10-35467 (E) 030610 030610

Please recycle

**Annex to the letter dated 5 May 2010 from the Permanent Representative of Brazil to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Economic and Social Council**

# Report of Brazil on implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to gender equality and empowerment of women

*Summary*

The second National Women's Policy Plan, which covers the period 2008 to 2011, takes Brazil's international commitments into account. Preparation of the Plan was coordinated by the Department of Women's Policies (SPM) in the Office of the President of the Republic with the involvement of 22 national bodies and 300,000 Brazilian women, whose views were heard at national, municipal and state conferences. The initial poverty reduction target — a 25 per cent reduction over the 1990 level — was achieved in 2007. The Family Grant programme and other social programmes have reduced the proportion of the population classified as poor from 12 per cent in 2003 to 4.8 per cent in 2008. With respect to education, the enrolment rate is slightly higher for girls than for boys at all grade levels. The Gender and Diversity at School Programme is one of the initiatives aimed at overcoming gender and racial stereotypes. The maternal mortality rate declined from 140 to 75 per 100,000 live births between 1990 and 2007. The National Maternal Mortality Reduction Pact, the Infant Mortality Rate Reduction Plan for the Legal Amazon and North-East Regions, and other measures are being implemented with a view to the achievement of Goal 4 of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The National Violence against Women Pact includes the activities of 11 federal, state and municipal bodies. A network of services for women victims of violence, including a free hotline ("Llame 180"), has been established. Implementation of the National Plan for the Eradication of Trafficking in Persons (PNETP) includes prevention, staff training and treatment of victims. The National Decent Work Plan reflects the principle of work equity. Discrimination is combated through the Pro-Gender-Equity Programme, the National Family Farming Programme — Women (PRONAF — Mujer) line of credit and other initiatives. In order to increase the number of women in positions of power, the election laws were amended in 2009. The SPM, the Women's Bench in the National Congress and the National Forum of Women's Organizations in Political Parties encourage women to run for office and promote a change in social attitudes.

# Contents


| | Page |
|---|---|
| List of abbreviations and acronyms | 4 |
| Women's policies | 5 |
| Women and poverty | 6 |
| Education and training for women | 6 |
| Women and health | 9 |
| Violence against women | 10 |
| Women and the economy | 12 |
| Women in positions of power and decision-making posts | 14 |
| References | 18 |

## List of abbreviations and acronyms

| | |
|---|---|
| HIV/AIDS | Human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome |
| ILO | International Labour Organization |
| IPEA | Institute for Applied Economic Research |
| IUD | Intra-uterine device |
| PNPM | National Women's Policy Plan |
| PRONAF | National Family Farming Programme |
| SINASC | Live Births Information System |
| SPM | Department of Women's Policies |
| STDs | Sexually transmitted diseases |
| SUS | Single Health System |
| UCI | Intermediate care unit |
| UNDP | United Nations Development Programme |
| UNFPA | United Nations Population Fund |
| UNICEF | United Nations Children's Fund |
| UNIFEM | United Nations Development Fund for Women |
| UTI | Intensive care unit |

## Introduction

1. Social policies aimed at the most vulnerable groups and policies for promoting equality and combating discrimination have characterized the Government of President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva since his first term of office. These policies include commitments made with respect to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs); the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action; the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, which Brazil ratified in 1984; the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment, and Eradication of Violence against Women (Convention of Belém do Pará), which Brazil ratified in 1995; and the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (Palermo Protocol), which Brazil ratified in 2004.

## Women's policies

2. The Department of Women's Policies (SPM), which operates under the Office of the Pres :nt of the Republic and is headed by a woman Minister of State, is responsible for coordinating, together with other sectors of Government, the effort to reflect women's demands, needs and potential in the entire process of public policy development, implementation and execution.

3. The manner in which the various sectors of Government are integrated is set forth explicitly in the two National Women's Policy Plans (PNPMs), which were the outcome of the National Women's Policy Conferences held in July 2004 and August 2007. These two Conferences directly involved in municipal and provincial conferences over 300,000 Brazilian women, who, together with the Government, established the principles and guidelines of the PNPMs.

4. PNPM I includes 199 activities in five strategic areas; PNPM II (2008-2011) was expanded with an additional 388 activities in 11 areas; 22 bodies were involved in their implementation.[1] Its 11 strategic areas are: economic independence and equality in work-related matters; inclusive, non-discriminatory education; women's health and sexual and reproductive rights; addressing all forms of violence against women; women in positions of power and decision-making posts; sustainable development in rural, urban and woodland areas; the right to land, decent housing and social infrastructures; the environment; culture, communication and the media; addressing racism, sexism and prejudice against lesbians; addressing inequalities between age groups; and oversight and monitoring of the Plan.[2]

[1] PNPM II (2008-2011) is posted on the web site in Portuguese, Spanish and English: http://200.130.7.5/spmu/portal_pr/destaques_plano_nacional_pr.htm.

[2] In order to facilitate the monitoring, evaluation and societal oversight of the PNPM, the Plan Coordination and Monitoring Committee, on which 16 ministries and departments are represented, has been established. In 2009, the Brazilian Gender Equality Observatory was inaugurated in order to provide support for the formulation and improvement of gender policies and of public policy in general at the federal, state and municipal levels. The Observatory consists of five working groups in strategic areas: public policy, legislation and legislators, international affairs, and communications and the media.

5. The public policy implementation authorities in other federal bodies are being strengthened by encouraging the development of state and municipal women's policy plans. At present, there are 22 gender bodies in the states and 277 municipal offices, coordinating bodies and focal points. The 23 state women's rights councils and 345 municipal councils also work with Government bodies.

## Women and poverty

6. The 2010 National Millennium Development Goals Monitoring Report shows a continuing decline in the levels of poverty and extreme poverty and although there is still a wide gap between rich and poor, it has been narrowing at a reasonable rate. The initial poverty reduction target has been voluntarily increased; the poverty rate was to have been reduced to 25 per cent of the 1990 level by 2010, but this goal was achieved by 2007 and exceeded in 2008.

7. One of the Brazilian Government's primary poverty elimination measures is the Family Grant programme. This programme involves a direct transfer of funds, considered to be the largest in the world, subject to certain conditions: prenatal examinations, nutrition and health monitoring and school attendance by children and adolescents. At present, 12.4 million families — over 43 million people — are receiving family grants.

8. Families listed in a single register are classified as poor or extremely poor; this determines the amount of the grant. In 94 per cent of cases, the funds are disbursed to families through women. Both the beneficiaries and the providers agree that it is preferable for the recipients to be women since they are considered to have a better understanding of the family's needs and to be likely to spend the money on food and on children. The Programme's primary impact on women's social status is that they are viewed as consumers; that their authority in the home is affirmed by the purchasing power derived from the grant; and that the beneficiaries are now perceived as citizens because they have received identification documents.

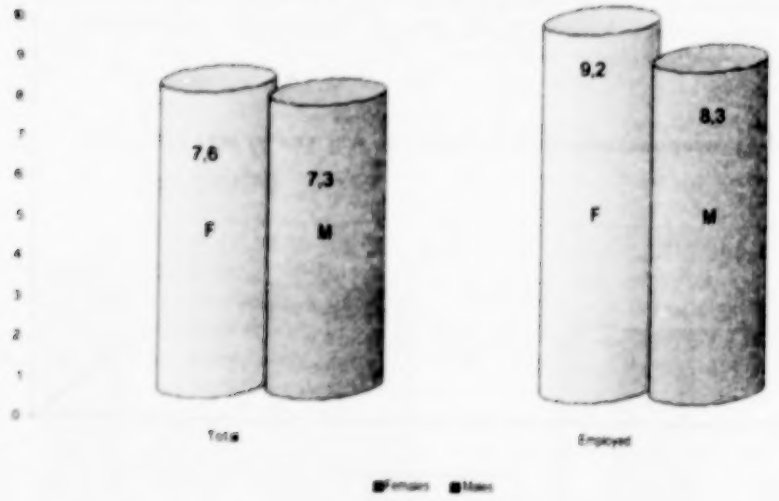
9. As a result of implementation of the Family Grant programme and of other social policies, the proportion of the population living in poverty — on less than US$ 1.25 per day (based on purchasing power parity) — fell from 12 per cent to 4.8 per cent between 2003 and 2008.

## Education and training for women

10. Women have been represented in increasing numbers at all levels of education in Brazil. They account for the majority of high school and university students and receive the majority of M.A. and Ph.D. scholarships in the country. In 2008, women over 15 had received, on average, 7.6 years of education as compared to 7.3 years for men (see Graphs I and II). These positive statistics for women's education include younger women, but not poor women in older age groups. In light of the observed overall enrolment parity, with a slightly higher level for women, affirmative action measures are confined to groups such as indigenous women, rural dwellers, women in quilombo communities, Afro-descendents, disabled persons and older persons.

Graph I

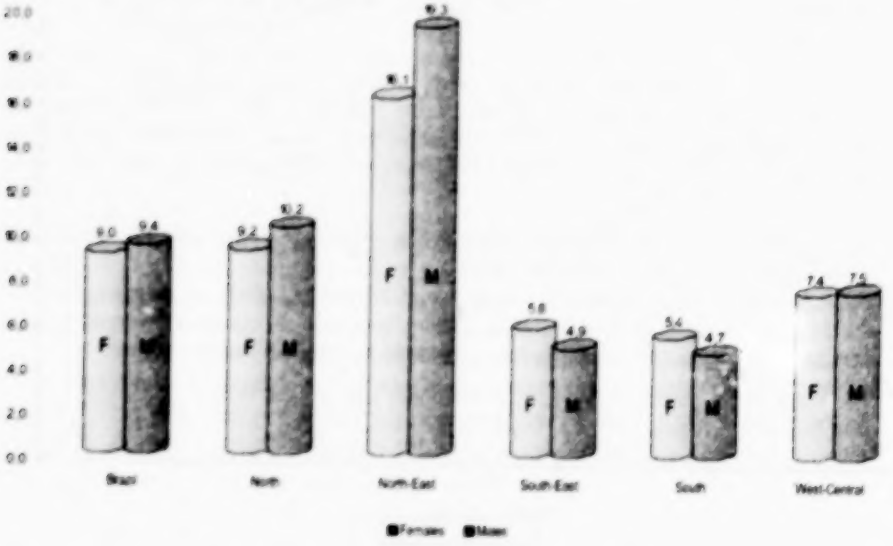
**Average number of years of study among the population aged 15 years or older in urban areas (total and employed), by sex. Brazil, 2008**




*Source*: Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics, *Synthesis of social indicators 2008: An Analysis of Living Conditions* (Rio de Janeiro, 2008).

Graph II

**Illiteracy rate for 10-year-olds, by sex. Brazil, 2008**

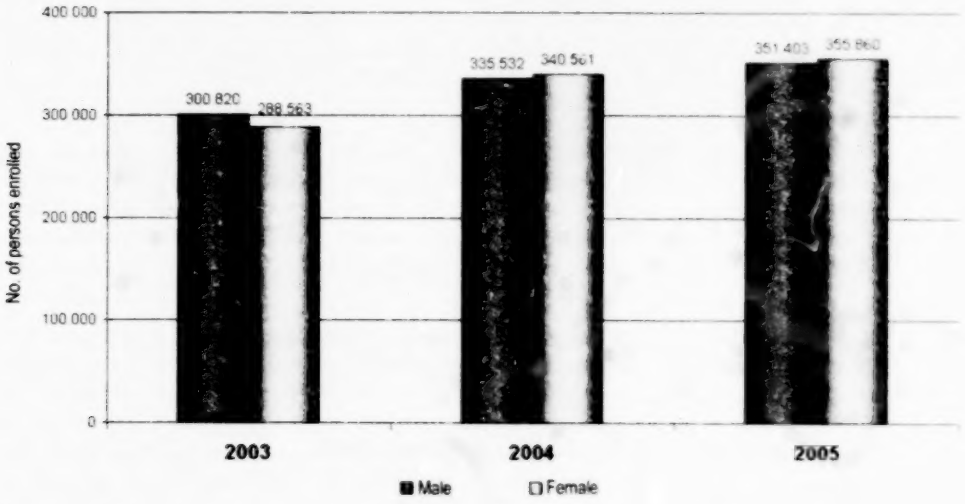



*Source*: Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics, *Synthesis of social indicators 2008: An Analysis of Living Conditions* (Rio de Janeiro, 2008).

11. Enrolment in professional and technological education increased between 2003 and 2005; enrolment levels were slightly higher for women than for men (see Graph III). However, men continue to predominate in the so-called "male" types of work: industry, computer science and farming. The exception is civil construction, an area in which many women have received training. Women still predominate in the health-related fields of study.

Graph III

**Enrolment in vocational education in Brazil by year and by sex: 2003, 2004 and 2005**




12. Despite the progress achieved, there is still a fundamental need for gender equality: awareness-raising for federal, state and municipal officials; training of professionals at the national level; mainstreaming gender into basic and higher education curricula; and preparation of teaching materials and instruction guidelines for classroom use.

13. In order to overcome gender stereotypes, which are associated with racial and sexual orientation stereotypes, the Ministry of Education, in coordination with the SPM, has been implementing the Gender and Diversity at School Programme since 2005. The Programme trains public school teachers to manage diversity in the classroom and to overcome prejudice expressed in attitudes and behaviour.

14. In addition to this effort to change gender stereotypes in education, the Women and Science Programme has been implemented since 2005 in order to foster scientific research and consideration of gender relations in Brazil and to increase the number of women in scientific fields and science teaching. The Programme includes: (a) the Building Gender Equality Prize, a set of essays and scientific articles targeting secondary school, university and graduate school students; the latest version was read by some 5,000 students; (b) the gender, women's and feminist studies research bulletin; and (c) the National Research Communities and Groups Meeting: Considering Gender and the Sciences.

15. The 1,000 Women Project also focus on promoting equity, combating violence and ensuring access to education. By the end of 2010, it will have provided technical and technological training to some 1,000 disadvantaged women in the North and North-East regions of the country, according to the economic activity of each community. The Programme has three main areas — education, citizenship and sustainable development — and promotes social inclusion through training with the goal of independence and the development of alternatives with a view to entry into the labour market.

## Women and health

16. Under PNPM I and II and in coordination with the SPM, the Ministry of Health is implementing a number of programmes and activities that focus on women's specific health needs. The incorporation of a diversity perspective and of the particular needs of women from various areas and social situations such as, inter alia, indigenous, black, lesbian and bisexual, adolescent, young and older women, women prisoners, rural dwellers, women in situations of violence and HIV/AIDS-positive women, has been important in ensuring the universality, equity and comprehensiveness of the health services. The National Comprehensive Women's Health Care Policy has been in place since 2004.[3]

17. There has been a progressive decline in the maternal mortality rate, which fell from 140 to 75 per 100,000 live births between 1990 and 2007. The National Maternal Mortality Reduction Pact, which has been recognized as an innovative strategy for mobilizing society in pursuit of the MDGs, was launched in 2004 in order to address the enormous challenge of reducing the maternal mortality rate to 35 per 100,000 live births by 2015. This Pact, which has been adopted by all 27 of Brazil's states, highlights the activities of the nation's approximately 1,000 maternal mortality committees at the national, regional, state and municipal levels. A 15 per cent reduction in the country's maternal mortality rate by 2011 is anticipated.

18. The Infant Mortality Rate Reduction Plan for the Legal Amazon and North-East Regions seeks to reduce the infant and neonatal mortality rate in 250 high-priority municipalities of these key regions by five per cent annually until 2010. The Plan therefore provides for an increase in the number of family health teams; prenatal, childbirth and newborn health examinations; additional beds in the intensive care units (UTIs) and intermediate care units (UCIs); facility modification in maternity units and hospitals; safe transport for pregnant women and newborns; expansion of the Mother's Milk Bank Network; training of paediatricians and gynaecologists; training of urgent and emergency obstetrical care professionals; training of health transport, information and monitoring professionals; with respect to information management, an increase in the coverage and quality of the mortality and live birth databases; epidemiological monitoring of foetal, infant and maternal deaths by the state and municipal health departments; establishment of infant and

[3] In Brazil, health-related activities and services are offered both by State (federal, state and municipal) bodies and institutions and by public institutions that ensure quality control, conduct research and produce drugs and other products, including blood, blood products and equipment. This set of activities and services constitutes the single health system (SUS) in accordance with article 4 of the Single Health System Organization Act (Act No. 8,080, adopted in 1990).

maternal mortality committees; improved social monitoring and mobilization; and promotion of regional studies on issues related to infant and maternal mortality.

19. The National Sexual and Reproductive Rights Policy is an instrument used to increase the number and variety of contraceptive methods distributed to women of reproductive age. This Policy, which is based on a broad concept of women's health, seeks to prevent unwanted pregnancy and to reduce the number of induced abortions and resulting maternal deaths. The three areas on which the Policy focuses are the increased availability of reversible contraceptive methods, better access to voluntary surgical sterilization, and coverage of assisted human reproduction under the Single Health System (SUS).[4]

20. The National Family Planning Programme, launched in 2007, promoted, inter alia, coverage of vasectomies under the National Elective Surgery Policy and of the sale of contraceptives at discounts of up to 90 per cent by authorized pharmacies and drugstores under the Brazilian People's Pharmacies Programme. Since 2008, 1 billion condoms have been acquired for distribution and information on contraceptive methods has been more widely disseminated.

21. The goal of the Integrated Plan for Reduction of the Number of Women with HIV/AIDS and other Sexually Transmitted Diseases, implemented with support from the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), is to provide guidance for the development and implementation of inter-sectoral activities that can provide more rapid access to tools for the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and HIV/AIDS. There are 20 state action plans aimed at reducing the transmission rate, which is rising most rapidly among adult married women.

22. Other noteworthy initiatives include the Breast and Cervical Cancer Screening Action Plan, which provided increased numbers of mammograms, breast biopsies and Pap smears and reduced the number of radical, mutilating surgeries; field-level obstetrical care, such as training in emergency care for doctors and nurses and normal childbirth campaigns; the National Sickle-Cell Anaemia Carrier Treatment Programme, which focuses on women of reproductive age; and the Mobile Emergency Care Service.

## Violence against women

23. In 2003, through the development and implementation of the National Violence against Women Policy, prevention and treatment programmes and efforts to ensure women's enjoyment of their rights in various areas have been developed.

24. The Domestic and Family Violence Act (Act No. 11,340 of 7 August 2006, also called the Maria da Penha Act) established a mechanism for combating domestic and family violence against women; UNIFEM considers the Act to be one of the world's three most progressive pieces of legislation for addressing violence

[4] Since the 2005 launch of the National Sexual and Reproductive Rights Policy, the Ministry of Health has distributed contraceptive methods to SUS users: emergency pills and mini-pills (since 2006), injectable contraceptives, diaphragms, male condoms and intra-uterine devices (IUDs).

against women. It is based on the international instruments that Brazil has ratified and, inter alia, provides for the establishment of domestic and family violence against women courts and for the treatment and protection of women in situations of domestic and family violence.

25. In August 2007, the federal Government launched the National Violence against Women Pact, which covers programmes to be implemented during the period 2008-2011 with a focus on rural, black and indigenous women, taking into account the specific needs of each group, the discrimination to which those women are subjected and their greater social vulnerability. A total of 11 ministries and departments, in addition to states and municipalities, publicly owned enterprises, the judiciary, the Office of the Prosecutor and international and non-governmental organizations were involved in preparation of the Pact; all of them are seeking to address all forms of violence against women through prevention, treatment and protection and by ensuring that women in situations of violence can exercise their rights and promoting cultural changes that foster egalitarian attitudes and the ethical values of full respect for diversity and peace.

26. The Pact's four strategic areas call for activities such as (a) construction and renovation of and provision of new equipment for women's services referral centres, shelters, specialized women's police stations, special domestic and family violence against women courts and women's ombudsmen's offices; (b) training of professionals in the network of services for women in situations of violence; (c) support for initiatives aimed at preventing violence against women and strengthening respect for the human rights of women prisoners; (d) expansion and consolidation of the women's services hotline, Llame 180; (e) promotion and implementation of campaigns for preventing and combating violence against women; (f) implementation of the National Trafficking in Persons Policy; and (g) teacher training in non-discriminatory content.

27. The country currently has 68 shelters, 146 referral centres, 56 specialized ombudsman's offices, 475 specialized women's police stations or units, 147 specialized criminal courts or magistrates for cases involving domestic and family violence against women, 14 specialized units in state public prosecutors' offices and 5 special prosecutors' offices, 8 trafficking-in-persons units and 7 rehabilitation centres for abusers.

28. The women's services hotline, Llame 180 — a service that the federal Government has provided since 2005 — received 401,729 calls in 2009, a 1.89 per cent increase over 2006. Because this number is toll-free nationwide, it provides both access to the network of services for women in situations of violence and important information that is used to develop public policy for addressing the problem of violence against women.

29. The National Campaign for Addressing Violence against Women in Rural and Woodland Areas is a major campaign launched in 2008. Its goal, expressed through the words "Women in charge of their own lives: Women in rural and woodland areas have a right to live without violence", is to inform women in rural and woodland areas about domestic and family violence and warn them against it. The campaign, which focuses on women working in rural areas, women coconut workers, black women in rural and quilombo communities, Amazonian women, rubber tree workers and rural dwellers, involves setting up cultural offices, organizing activities in the

schools and developing radio programmes, soap operas and educational activities in order to set up a network of support for ending violence against women.

30. Concerning trafficking in persons, the National Plan for the Eradication of Trafficking in Persons (PNETP), adopted in 2008, includes the following activities: (a) support for a pilot project that involves setting up a network of services, developing a proposed methodology for providing services to women victims of trafficking in persons and strengthening prevention efforts; (b) development of training programmes and expansion of the Women's Services Network in order to address the problem of trafficking in women; (c) training all the operators on the women's services hotline, Llame 180, to deal appropriately with women victims of trafficking; and (d) support for the establishment of service referral centres for women in situations of violence in the nation's land border regions. In that connection, Brazil signed a memorandum of understanding on border issues with Argentina and Paraguay in November 2009 and another with Venezuela in April 2010.

## Women and the economy

31. Women's comparative advantage in education is not reflected on the labour market. Discrimination and inequality are even more evident in the workplace, which is characterized not only by social inequality, but also by ethnic, racial and gender inequality as a result of the hierarchy that recurs in virtually all social and economic indicators: generally speaking, men and whites find it easier to enter the labour market than women and blacks. Black women are the worst sufferers from discrimination because both their gender and their race or ethnicity set them apart.

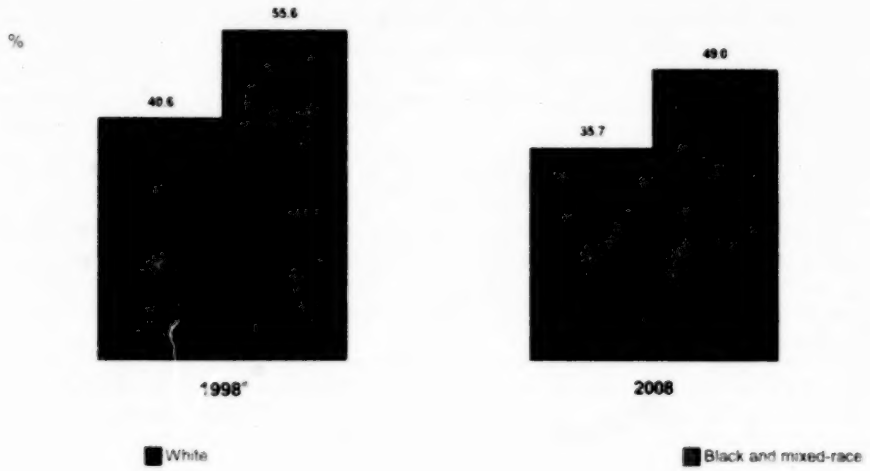
32. The National Decent Work Plan was adopted on 4 June 2009 in order to facilitate the coordination, monitoring and evaluation of the federal Government's programmes and activities relating to the commitments made and targets set by Brazil as part of a national strategy for reducing poverty and promoting equitable, inclusive and sustainable development. The Plan is the result of a common effort by 18 ministries and departments, coordinated by the Ministry of Labour and Employment and taking into account the gender perspective introduced by the SPM.

33. From 1998 to 2009, the proportion of women in the workforce rose from 52.8 per cent to 57.6 per cent. This percentage increase for women was matched by a slight decrease in the percentage of employed men. The continuing employment disparity between men and women is primarily a result of the fact that women are expected to perform unpaid domestic work. In 2008, Brazilian women devoted an average of 25.1 hours per week to caring for their families and housekeeping; men devoted an average of 10 hours per week to such tasks.

34. Working women hold lower-paid jobs with fewer social benefits. In 2008, 42 per cent of employed women held jobs that were viewed as insecure. Almost 16 per cent of Brazilian women are domestic workers (Graph IV). There is also a significant wage gap; in 2008, women's wages were 84 per cent of men's and that gap increases at higher levels of education.

Graph IV

**Percentage of the employed female population aged 15 or older performing jobs considered insecure because of the woman's race. Brazil, 1998-2008**




*Source*: Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics, "Pesquisa Nacional por Amostra de Domicílios" (National Sample Household Survey) 1998 and 2008.

*NB*: Undocumented workers, domestic workers, unpaid work, self-consumption activities and construction for personal use.

* Does not include the rural population of Rondônia, Acre, Amazonas, Roraima, Pará e Amapa.

35. Action taken to combat inequality and gender discrimination on the labour market includes the Pro-Gender-Equity Programme, launched in 2005 with support from the International Labour Organization (ILO) and UNIFEM, the primary objective of which is to promote equality of opportunity between men and women in public and private enterprise by developing new concepts and practices for human resource management and organizational culture. Such innovation is recognized by awarding a seal of approval that is valid for 12 months and demonstrates the enterprise's commitment to gender equity in all its institutional relations. The Programme strategy therefore gives enterprises an incentive to participate voluntarily and to develop an action plan for promoting equality of workplace opportunity between men and women.

36. During its first cycle, the Programme awarded the seal of approval to 11 public sector enterprises. In its second cycle (in 2007), 50 enterprises, both public and private, enrolled in the Programme; of that number, 36 submitted action plans and 23 received the seal of approval for having implemented at least 70 per cent of the planned activities. In 2009, 84 enterprises enrolled.

37. Two new work-related programmes are also noteworthy. The Women's Employment, Handicrafts, Tourism and Independence Programme seeks to strengthen public policies that foster local tourism by formulating strategies for the handicrafts sector that ensure women's independence and ownership from the gender equality and regional cultural identity perspectives. The Women's

Employment and Entrepreneurship Programme was launched in 2007 in order to encourage and support women in the establishment and running of their own businesses.

38. PRONAF-Women, a special line of credit for rural women, is an instrument for promoting equality between men and women in family farming. From 2003 to 2008, PRONAF-Women granted 35,697 loans at a value of over US$ 100 million to rural women, expanding with each harvest. Through this incentive, the proportion of loans granted to women increased from 10.47 per cent in 2001 to 25.58 per cent in 2006.

39. An important factor in the viability of these loans was the issuance of 560,000 identification documents between 2004 and 2007 under the National Rural Women Workers Documentation Programme, which not only made it possible to issue such documents at no cost but promoted specific efforts to increase awareness of the need for and usefulness of civil registration and employment documents and advised women on how to benefit from public policy in the areas of agrarian reform, family farming and social security.

40. Also on the issue of rural women, the commitment to issue 400,000 joint land titles to plots of land owned by couples — to all the families that benefited from the agrarian reform between 2004 and 2007 under PNPM I — was more than met. 415,653 women benefited from the Settlement Project. In 2000, 13 per cent of women held titles to plots of land. By 2007, as a result of the new measures, that number had risen to 55.8 per cent. The available data shows a significant increase in the number of rural women beneficiaries of the loan and agrarian reform programmes, which are improving the living conditions and increasing the independence of thousands of women.

## Women in positions of power and decision-making posts

41. PNPM II endorsed a concept of political participation that includes a variety of approaches, ranging from membership in organizations of civil society to the holding of Government posts and elected office. At present, women are widely represented in various professional groups such as bar associations, trade unions, universities and political parties.[5]

42. There has been a slow and gradual increase in the number of women in positions of power in Brazil (see table). In the 2006 elections, only 176 of the 2,498 women candidates (including 2 candidates for the office of President of the Republic, 26 for state government office, 35 for Senate seats, 652 for seats in the Chamber of Deputies and 1,783 for seats in the state and Federal District legislative

[5] In these institutions, women normally form groups by establishing forums — coordinating bodies, departments and focal points — in order to conduct studies and present proposals on women's issues and gender relations to the relevant institutions, the Government and society. Within the framework of organized society, there are feminist movements and other movements representing a wide variety of women: black, indigenous and rural women, domestic workers, homemakers and mothers. These groups are based on identities that go beyond gender to include, inter alia, social status, race or ethnicity and sexual orientation. Other participatory forums for women focus on the environment; human rights; lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (transvestite and transsexual) issues; persons with disabilities; older persons; children; and young people.

assemblies) were elected. This includes the 123 women (11.61 per cent) who were elected to fill some of the 1,059 seats in the state and Federal District legislative assemblies. Women account for 11.1 per cent of the 27 state governors and 7.5 per cent of the 5,559 mayors. This underrepresentation of women is even greater in the case of black, indigenous, young and lesbian women, women with disabilities, rural working women, domestic workers and women from low-income groups.

**Distribution of men and women by post in elected decision-making bodies. Brazil, 2009**

| *Branches of government* | *Position* | *Women* | | *Men* | | *Total* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | *No.* | *%* | *No.* | *%* | *No.* |
| Legislative branch | Federal Deputy | 45 | 8.77 | 468 | 91.23 | 513 |
| | State/District Deputy | 123 | 11.60 | 936 | 88.40 | 1,059 |
| | Councilman/woman | 6,556 | 12.65 | 45,252 | 87.40 | 51,808 |
| | Senator | 10 | 12.34 | 71 | 87.654 | 81 |
| Executive branch | President of the Republic | — | — | 1 | 100.0 | 1 |
| | Governor | 3 | 11.10 | 24 | 88.9 | 27 |
| | Mayor | 418 | 7.50 | 5,141 | 92.5 | 5,559 |
| Judicial branch | Judge/Fed Sup Ct | 2 | 22.2 | 9 | 77.8 | 11 |
| | Judge/Sup Ct Justice | 5 | 16.7 | 30 | 83.3 | 35 |
| | Judge/Supr Labour Ct | 5 | 23.8 | 21 | 76.2 | 26* |
| | Judge/Supr Elect Trib | 1 | 16.7 | 6 | 83.3 | 7 |
| | Judge/Supr Mil Trib | 1 | 7.1 | 14 | 92.9 | 15 |
| | Total | 14 | 17.5 | 80 | 82.5 | 94* |

*Sources*: Supreme Electoral Court; Federal Supreme Court; and http://www.brasil.gov.br.

*Abbreviations*: STF, Federal Supreme Court; STJ, Supreme Court of Justice; TST, Superior Labour Court; TSE, Supreme Electoral Tribunal; STM, Supreme Military Tribunal.

* 1 vacant post.

43. At the international level, Brazil was one of the first countries to ensure women's exercise of their political rights. However, it currently ranks among the countries with intermediate or poor performance with respect to the number of women in Congress. In 2009, according to the Inter-Parliamentary Union, Brazil ranked 107th among 187 countries, below the average for the Americas, which was 22.6 per cent for the lower house and 20.2 per cent for the upper house.

44. The Women's Bench in the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate is the national gender equality mechanism for the legislative branch. In close coordination with the SPM, it seeks to include discussion of gender issues under all the major items on the agenda of the Chamber of Deputies, such as the economic crisis, political reform and amendments to the Civil Code. The Women's Bench in the Chamber of Deputies currently consists of 45 deputies from 11 parties. In the Senate, the Bench consists of 10 senators from 4 parties.

45. The 2009 amendment of Act No. 9,504/97 is an important step forward in promoting increased political participation by women. A tripartite committee coordinated by the SPM prepared draft legislation and spoke at congressional debates on political reform. As a result of this committee's hard work and that of the Women's Bench, the original wording, "reserve", was changed to "fill", thereby ensuring that each party's or coalition's slate must include a minimum of 30 per cent and a maximum of 70 per cent of candidates of each sex. Women are also ensured a share of their parties' electoral campaign funds and 10 per cent of the free airtime provided for campaigning.[6]

46. The National Forum of Women's Organizations in Political Parties includes representatives of 16 parties.[7] Its goal is to monitor and promote the advancement of women in party bodies; to cooperate in training women on political issues; to have an impact on the discussion of electoral reforms and on legal matters related to elections; to ensure that women's demands are included in campaign platforms; to encourage women to run for office; and to play an effective role in combating discrimination against women.

47. With support from the SPM and the National Council for Women's Rights, the Forum developed the More Women in Power Platform, which develops policies to be used by candidates for elective office. This Platform is based on the ongoing campaign by the same name that was launched in 2009 in order to promote change

---

[6] With respect to increasing women's political participation, Act No. 12,034/2009 introduced the following amendments:

(a) Act No. 9,504/1997, article 10, paragraph 3, entered into force with the following wording: "Each party or coalition shall fill a minimum of 30 (thirty) per cent and a maximum of 70 (seventy) per cent of the quotas established under the rules set forth in this article with candidates of each sex".

(b) In article 44 of Act No. 9,096/1995, which regulates the use of parties' campaign funds, the chapeau of paragraph V and paragraph V (5) have been expanded to read:

> "V. The national party leadership body shall allocate a minimum of 5 (five) per cent of funds to the establishment and implementation of programmes that promote and publicize women's political participation."
>
> "5. Any party that does not comply with the provisions of the chapeau of paragraph V of this article shall increase the portion of its campaign funds allocated to this purpose by 2.5 per cent for the following year and shall be prohibited from using it for any other activity."

(c) Article 45, paragraph IV, of Act No. 9,096/1995, which deals with the free airtime provided for political campaigning, has been expanded to read:

> "IV. — promoting and publicizing women's political participation by allocating to women the amount of airtime determined by the national party leadership body, which shall be a minimum of 10 (ten) per cent."

[7] Of the 27 political parties registered in Brazil, 16 have internal women's organizations: the Democrats (DEM), the Partido Comunista Brasileiro (PCB), the Partido Comunista do Brasil (PCdoB), the Partido Democrático Trabalhista (PDT), the Partido Humanista da Solidariedade (PHS), the Partido do Movimento Democrático Brasileiro (PMDB), the Partido Popular (PP), the Partido Popular Socialista (PPS), the Partido de la República (PR), the Partido Republicano Brasileiro (PRB), the Partido Socialista Brasileiro (PSB), the Partido da Social Democracia Brasileira (PSDB), the Partido dos Trabalhadores (PT), the Partido Trabalhista Brasileiro (PTB), the Partido Trabalhista Nacional (PTN) and the Partido Verde (PV).

in power structures and institutions, as well as cultural and attitudinal changes leading to new social relations between women and men.[8] Another measure taken jointly by the Forum and the SPM is the development of teaching materials for training women members of political parties; this has helped many women to run for office. To that end, regional seminars were held in 10 states during the first half of 2010. Special attention has been paid to encouraging political participation by black women through the publication of a specific guide by the Racial Equality Policy Department with support from the United Nations Development Fund (UNDP).

48. A significant number of women have achieved high-level professional posts in the judiciary by competitive recruitment (a series of examinations), although their numbers are fewer in the upper echelons. Women account for 45.95 per cent of lawyers, 34.4 per cent of judges and 19.45 per cent of members of the national councils of justice. In 2009, 14 of the 80 superior court judges (17.5 per cent) were women. In the executive branch, the percentage of women in high-level posts rose from 13 per cent in 1999 to 20 per cent in 2009. In the diplomatic corps, women accounted for only 6.1 per cent of Brazil's ambassadors in 2003; at present, 21 of the country's 177 ambassadors are women (11.86 per cent of all diplomats of this rank; women account for 21.1 per cent of the diplomatic corps).

[8] The More Women in Power Platform, developed by the National Forum of Women's Organizations in Political Parties with support from the SPM and the National Council for Women's Rights in preparation for the 2008 elections, was updated for the 2010 state and federal elections. In October 2010, elections were held to fill the office of President of the Republic; state and Federal District government offices; two-thirds of the seats in the federal Senate; and seats in the Chamber of Deputies and the state and Federal District legislative assemblies. The website http://www.maishulheresnopoderbrasil.com.br posts news, statistics, legislation, articles and studies on women in politics, positions of power and decision-making posts by covering women's representation not only in the three branches of Government, but also in public and private enterprises, political parties, and movements and organizations of civil society.

## References

Institute of Applied Economic Research and Department of Planning and Strategic Investment (2010). Millennium Development Goals, fourth national monitoring report.

Department of Women's Policies, Office of the President of the Republic (2008).

Second National Women's Policy Plan. Outcome of the Second National Women's Policy Conference.

SPM-PR. 2009.

Report on implementation of the First National Women's Policy Plan (PNPM I).